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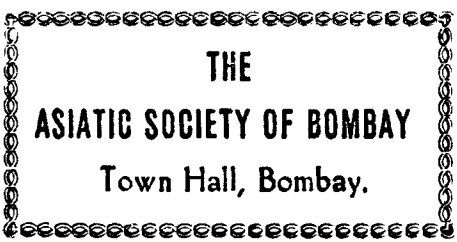

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THE

LIFE OF GEORGE CRUIKSHANK,

VOL. I.

From the Drawing by Maclise
originally published in
Fraser's Magazine

THE LIFE

OF

GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

In Two Epochs

[redacted] ac

BY

BLANCHARD JERROLD

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF DOUGLAS JERROLD," "THE LIFE OF NAPOLEON III.," "THE CHRISTIAN VAGABOND," ETC.

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WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

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IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.

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CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY

1882

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"If ever you happen to meet with two volumes of Grimm's 'German Stories,' which were illustrated by Cruikshank long ago, pounce upon them instantly; the etchings in them are the finest things, next to Rembrandt's, that, as far as I know, have been done since etching was invented."—RUSKIN.

"All British people, even publicans and distillers, we should hope, have a kindly feeling for George Cruikshank."—W. M. ROSSETTI.

"Am I stilted or turgid when I paraphrase that which Johnson said of Homer and Milton, *in re* the *Iliad* and the *Paradise Lost*, and say of Hogarth and Cruikshank that George is not the greatest pictorial humourist our country has seen, only because he is not the first?"—SALA'S "Life of William Hogarth."

Dedication.

TO GUSTAVE DORÉ.

My dear Doré,

When some five-and-twenty years ago we were waiting together, at Boulogne, for the arrival of the Queen, who was on her way to Paris, we spent an evening at the hotel with the late Herbert Ingram, for whom we had undertaken—you to illustrate, and I to describe—the pageant for the "Illustrated London News." It was a pleasant evening, closed by a long moonlight ramble on the sands. While we talked, you filled a vast sheet of paper with a medley of fancies, squibs, caricatures, and satires, in which public events were jumbled with private jokes; while the great folk, of whose doings we were the chroniclers, were marshalled in procession with our humble selves. I remember the astonishment expressed on Ingram's face when, as we were leaving for our walk and cigar, he glanced over your shoulder at the hosts with which you

had peopled the broad page before you. It was a prodigious tour de force,—*so curious and complete an emanation of the humorous and satirical part of your genius, that I pardon Ingram for having decamped with it on the morrow morning before we were up.*

It is the remembrance of all that sheet contained which has led me to dedicate this record of our friend George Cruikshank's life and work to you. Poring over his etchings and wood drawings, my mind has constantly reverted to your work of the Rabelais, Wandering Jew, and Contes Drôlatiques period; and I have perceived a strong affinity between one aspect of your genius and that of "the inimitable George."

It is to the illustrious illustrator of Rabelais and of Dante that I dedicate these disjecta membra *of a life of the illustrator of Grimm, of Oliver Twist, and of Shakespeare's Falstaff.*

Accept it, my dear Doré, as a tribute to your genius, but also as a public acknowledgment of your sterling qualities as a friend and of your rare gifts as an intellectual companion.

BLANCHARD JERROLD.

New Year's Day, 1882.

PREFACE.

In the following pages I have endeavoured to present George Cruikshank to the reader—not only as he lived and moved and worked, but also in the light in which he was held by his many friends and his distinguished critics. The artist has been warned by the poet that he should "rest in art." Cruikshank was not of those who needed the warning. He remained heart and soul in his creative work throughout a long career, content to live modestly, and to rest his claim to the respect of the world upon his labours. If his indefatigable industry failed to bring him the fortune which fashion now lavishes upon his inferiors, he was consoled by the fervid admiration of such critics as Thackeray and Ruskin, and other distinguished contemporaries, whose opinions on his genius I have

freely given, as the best aids to a thorough estimate of him as an artist.

These volumes should be accepted as *mémoires pour servir*, as material towards a just judgment of the artist and the man. I am indebted to George Cruikshank's friends for many personal anecdotes, and to my own recollections of him, ranging from my boyhood to his death, for the general outline of the "dear old George," whose humour and eccentricity delighted Dickens, Douglas Jerrold, Thackeray, and their friends for many years. I am indebted to the late Charles Landseer, to Mr. Frederick Locker, the late Mr. W. H. Wills (co-editor with Dickens of *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*), Mr. Percival Leigh, the only survivor of the original contributors to *Punch*, Mr. George Augustus Sala, Dr. B. W. Richardson, the late Mr. Gruneison, Mr. Percy Cruikshank, Cuthbert Bede, and many others, including the gentleman with whom Cruikshank's temperance

campaign brought him in contact towards the close of his life.

As a tribute to the genius of Cruikshank, Gustave Doré has contributed a drawing, called by him The Gin-Fiend, which will remind the hosts of English admirers of the illustrious French painter, sculptor, and illustrator, of the time when he produced the *Contes Drôlatiques* and the *Wandering Jew*.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

EPOCH I.

CHAPTER I. PAGE

TWO EPOCHS 1

CHAPTER II.

FROM CRANACH TO CRUIKSHANK 7

CHAPTER III.

CRUIKSHANK'S EARLY DAYS 38

CHAPTER IV.

CRUIKSHANK AS A POLITICAL CARICATURIST . . . 65

CHAPTER V.

"LIFE IN LONDON," "LIFE IN PARIS," "POINTS OF HUMOUR," ETC. 111

CHAPTER VI.

HAND-TO-MOUTH WORK 155

CHAPTER VII.

'THREE COURSES AND A DESSERT" 185

CHAPTER VIII. PAGE

"SKETCHES BY BOZ," "OLIVER TWIST," AND "THE LIFE OF GRIMALDI" 204

CHAPTER IX.

ILLUSTRATIONS TO HARRISON AINSWORTH'S ROMANCES 239

CHAPTER X.

"THE OMNIBUS" 274

ILLUSTRATIONS TO VOL. I.

	PAGE
Portrait of George Cruikshank, by Maclise. . . *Frontispiece*	
Portrait of George Cruikshank, from "Our Own Times" . *Vignette*	
Spirits of Wine	6
Flying Dustmen	7
Moving off with the *time*	16
Political Caricature	37
Dominie Sampson	38
"Shillahoo! who durst tread upon that?"	49
Going off by itself	55
Three Months after Marriage	64
Emerald cut Emerald	65
The First Gentleman	78
Mr. Cadwallader shouting "Murder"	82
Illustration to "The Doctor"	86
Bank Restriction Note . . . . . *to face page*	92
"Faded appetite resign'd the victim"	95
"Non mi ricordo!" . . . . . *to face page*	100
Hone and Cruikshank	110
The Jolly Beggars	136
Diamond cut Diamond	155
The Giant Bolster . . . . . *to face page*	167
Giles Scroggins and Molly Brown	177
The Three Thimbles; and Michael in Search of his Wife *to face page*	178
Philosophy in Sport	179
John Gilpin	181
The Epping Hunt . . . . . *to face page*	182
The Old Commodore	183

PAGE

The Pig that stole an old Gentleman 184
Bat Boroo and the Bull 185
A Dog that killed his own Mutton 187
The Counterpart Cousins 189
A Mushroom Aristocrat 191
Habbakuk Bulwrinkle. 195
Under the Thumb 202
The Witch's Switch 203
Grimaldi loses his Bet . . . . . *to face page* 237
Shaking a Doctor 238
The Dustman's Cart 239
"Never mind the weight of it" 273
Letter to Laman Blanchard . . . . . *to face page* 274
A Shirt Case 284

THE

LIFE OF GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

EPOCH I. 1794—1847.

CHAPTER I.

TWO EPOCHS.

"As a boy," Thackeray said of his friend George Cruikshank, "he began to fight for bread,* has been hungry (twice a-day, we trust) ever since, and has

---

George Cruikshank never felt the pinch of poverty. His family, of which his careful mother was the head, was never in want. It was a plain household, much disturbed, it must be said, by the intemperate habits of the father, as well as of the two sons, who were boisterous and bibulous young men who fell into scores of scrapes; but bed and board were always easily at command; and George made money enough for his pleasures even when he was drawing wood-blocks for Hone at ten shillings and sixpence each. He could execute two or three in the course of a day.

been obliged to sell his wit for his bread we[illegible] week. And his wit, sterling gold as it is, will find no such purchasers as the fashionable painter's thin pinchbeck, who can live comfortably for six weeks when paid for painting a portrait, and fancies his mind prodigiously occupied the while. There was an artist in Paris—an artist hairdresser—who used to be fatigued and take restoratives after inventing a new coiffure. By no such gentle operation of hair-dressing has Cruikshank lived. Time was (we are told so in print) when for a picture with thirty heads in it, he was paid three guineas—a poor week's pittance truly, and a dire week's labour. We make no doubt that the same labour would at present * bring him twenty times the sum; but whether it be ill paid or well, what labour has Mr. Cruikshank's been, and week by week, for thirty years, to produce something new—some smiling

* This passage is extracted from an article on Cruikshank, written by Thackeray, in the *Westminster Review* (1840); an article to which he frequently referred as having given him great pleasure in the writing.

offspring of painful labour, quite independent and distinct from its ten thousand jovial brethren; in what hours of sorrow and ill-health to be told by the world, 'Make us laugh, or you starve—give us fresh fun; we have eaten up the old, and are hungry!' And all this has he been obliged to do—to wring laughter day by day, sometimes, perhaps, out of want; often, certainly, from ill-health and depression—to keep the fire of his brain perpetually alight, for the greedy public will give it no leisure to cool. This has he done, and done well." More than forty years ago Thackeray was astonished at the many years of labour already performed by this "indefatigable man," and exclaimed, "What amazing energetic fecundity do we find in him!" The author of "Vanity Fair" was not often carried away by his emotion, but in the presence of the fire of his friend's genius he warmed to an unwonted heat. "He has told a thousand new truths in as many strange and fascinating ways; he has given a thousand new and pleasant thoughts to millions of people; he has never used his wit dishonestly; he has never, in all

the exuberance of his frolicsome nature, caused a single painful or guilty blush."

And yet, in 1840, George Cruikshank was not quite midway on his career! Only the first great epoch of his life was drawing to a close. For the life of Cruikshank is broadly divisible into two EPOCHS; viz., that extending from his birth to 1847, when he became a total abstainer; and that reaching from the year when he came to the conclusion that, to use his own words upon the title-page of the small edition of "The Bottle" (1874), "it was of no use preaching without setting an example," to his death.

In order to put the entire man before the world, it is necessary to deal as thoroughly with the first epoch of his life as with the second. Nay, it is only on this condition that the writer can make the whole deserts of this singular British worthy manifest. The present generation are familiar merely with the George Cruikshank of the last thirty years. But his course stretched through two generations of his fellow-men.

The public who knew the Cruikshank of the Regency, the Reform Bill, and of the dawn of the Victorian epoch, had ceased to laugh or weep, to take notes and criticise, when the veteran artist summoned his fellow-countrymen to inspect his Triumph of Bacchus. Cruikshank, the frolicsome, many-sided caricaturist, who worked with Hone and others as a political and social reformer; who gave the world an annual hearty laugh for many years in his *Comic Almanac;* and who gaily drove his *Omnibus* with that refined and poetic humourist, Laman Blanchard; was a roysterer, fond of the pleasures of the world, given to jovial parties, the centre of a group of boon companions, and a man who passed many painful morrow mornings. But, as his friend Thackeray, who spent many a lively evening with him, bears witness, Cruikshank, after his wild youth was passed, seldom overstepped the bounds of modesty, and never gave the influence of his genius to a cause in which he was not a heart and soul believer. From the earliest of his "years of discretion" he used his rare gifts as a sacred trust, and never allowed

hopes of fortune to tempt him out of the simple ways of plain living and high thinking.

The Cruikshank of our later day—of his second epoch—will gain only in dignity by a knowledge of him in his youth. We shall learn all he resisted;

Spirits of wine.—From "More Mornings at Bow Street."

how heroically he battled with himself; and with what success, while he purged his life of its grossness, he kept his heart free from asceticism; how the boy lived and laughed, in short, in the hale and hearty old man, even when he had solemnly dedicated his genius to a cause, the triumph of which he believed to be the only foundation of a pure and prosperous society.

Flying dustmen.—From "More Mornings at Bow Street."

CHAPTER II.

FROM CRANACH TO CRUIKSHANK.

THE history of caricature in England travels very little beyond George Cruikshank's lifetime. The very word *caricatura*, used by Sir Thomas Browne in his Christian morals, and transplanted to the *Spectator*, appeared first as an English word in Johnson's dictionary in the middle of the last century Caricature—the modern word and the modern art the use of the pencil and the etcher's point as ironical and satirical weapons—may be said to have taken root in this country under the breath of Hogarth's genius. It flourished in Germany,—nay may be said to have been born there, during the

Renaissance. The Reformation gave it its first great impulse, under the hand of Lucas Cranach. From Germany it travelled to France, thence to Holland, and from Holland to England. The famous caricaturists, however, are not many. Cranach, Peter Breughel, Jacques Callot—but particularly the latter—may be noted as caricaturists who made the way for our Hogarth, for the Spaniard Goya (a caricaturist of infinite humour), and so for Gillray, Rowlandson, Daumier, the Cruikshanks, Leech, and the elder Doyle. Our earliest caricaturists came over to us from the French and Dutch schools; and they flourished (albeit their names are forgotten now) until the genius of Hogarth rose, and founded a British school of caricature, racy of the soil. The names of John Collèt, Paul Sandby, Bunbury, and Woodward, were famous in their day; but they were destined to be eclipsed by the glory of James Gillray and the lesser light of Rowlandson; and these two, with Goya in Spain, and the renowned Daumier in France, represent the power which caricature exercised in the political

world at the close of the last and in the early days of the present century.

A writer in the "Encyclopædia Britannica"* has remarked of the rise of George Cruikshank, "The satirical grotesque of the eighteenth century had been characterised by a sort of grandiose brutality, by a certain vigorous obscenity, by a violence of expression and intuition, that appear monstrous in these days of reserve and restraint, but that doubtless suited well enough with the strong party feelings and fierce political passions of the age. After the downfall of Napoleon (1815), however, when strife was over, and men were weary and satisfied, a change in matter and manner came over the caricature of the period. In connection with this change, the name of George Cruikshank, an artist who stretches hands on the one side towards Hogarth and Gillray, and on the other towards Leech and Teniiel, deserves honourable mention. Cruikshank's political caricatures, some of which

* Ninth edition.

were designed for the squibs of William Hone,' are, comparatively speaking, uninteresting; his ambition was that of Hogarth—the production of moral comedies."

In an admirable article on the work and career of George Cruikshank, by Mr. John Paget, published in *Blackwood* (August 1863), an interesting passage occurs, showing how the link of historical caricature passed unbroken from the hands of Gillray to those of George Cruikshank.

"The political series of his (Gillray's) caricatures commences in the year 1782, shortly before the coalition between Fox and Lord North, and continues until 1810. It comprises not less than four hundred plates, giving an average of about fourteen for each year. When it is remembered that this period commences with the recognition of the independence of the United States; that it extends over the whole of the French Revolution, and a considerable portion of the Empire; that it comprises the careers of Pitt, Fox, Burke, Sheridan, Wyndham, Erskine, and Lord Thurlow,

and comes down to the times of Castlereagh, Canning, Lord Grey, and Sir Francis Burdett, and that the aspect of every actor who played any conspicuous part during that period is faithfully preserved "in his habit, as he lived," his gesture and demeanour, his gait, his mode of sitting and walking, his action in speaking—all, except the tone of his voice, presented to us as if we gazed through a glass at the men of former times—we shall feel that we owe no small debt to the memory of James Gillray.

"Nor is this all. He has given to us with equal fidelity the portraits of those actors who fill up the scene, who sustain the underplot of the comedy of life, but have only a secondary share, if any, in the main action of the drama. Nor was he simply a caricaturist. That he possessed the higher qualities of genius—imagination, fancy, and considerable tragic power—is abundantly shown by many of his larger and more important etchings, whilst a small figure of the unhappy Duchess of York, published in 1792, under the feigned signature of Charlotte Zethin,

gives proof that he was not wanting in tenderness or grace.

"Of those who appear in the etchings of Gillray the last has passed away from amongst us within a year of the present time. The figure of an old man, somewhat below the middle height, the most remarkable feature in whose face consisted of his dark overhanging eyebrows, habited in a loose blue coat with metal buttons, grey trousers, white stockings, and a thick pair of boots, walking leisurely along Pall Mall or St. James's Street, was familiar to many of our readers. The Marquess of Lansdowne (then Lord Henry Petty) appears for the first time in Gillray's prints in the year 1805; and it is not difficult to trace a resemblance between the youthful Chancellor of the Exchequer of more than half a century ago, and the Nestor of the Whigs, who survived more than three generations of politicians. The personal history of Gillray was a melancholy one. In 1809 his pencil showed no want of vigour, but his intellect shortly afterwards gave way under the

effect of intemperate habits. The last of his works was "A Barber's Shop in Assize-time," etched from a drawing by Harry Bunting in 1811. In four years more—years of misery and madness—he slept in the churchyard of St. James's, Piccadilly. A flat stone marks the resting-place, and records the genius, of 'Mr. James Gillray, the caricaturist, who departed this life June 1st, 1815, aged 58 years.'

"At the time of the death of Gillray, George Cruikshank was a young man of about five-and-twenty years of age. Sir Francis Burdett was a prominent figure in many of Gillray's latest caricatures in the year 1809. One of the earliest of George Cruikshank's represents the arrest of the Baronet under the warrant of the Speaker in 1810. The series is thus taken up without the omission of even a single link."

The same writer distinguishes justly between the two political caricaturists. In his early work Cruikshank often so closely resembles Gillray, that it is difficult to say in what minor points he is dissimilar; but a study of the political work of the two will

show that Gillray was the more vigorous of the pair, also the more audacious and unscrupulous. The writer in *Blackwood* remarks that Cruikshank in his own department is as far superior to Gillray as he falls short of him in the walk of art "in which no man before or since has ever approached the great Master of Political Caricature. In another, requiring more refined, more subtle, more intellectual qualities of mind, George Cruikshank stands pre-eminent, not only above Gillray, but above all other artists. He is the most perfect master of individual expression that ever handled a pencil or an etching-needle. This talent is equally shown in his earliest as in his latest works. Of the former, one of the finest examples is the first cut of the 'Queen's Matrimonial Ladder,' entitled 'Qualification.' The attitude was probably suggested by Gillray's plate of the same illustrious personage, as 'A Voluptuary suffering from the Horrors of Indigestion.' But here the superiority of Cruikshank over Gillray in this particular quality is at once apparent. Gillray's is a

finished copper-plate engraving, Cruikshank's a light woodcut, but there is not a line that does not tell its story. Down to the very tips of his fingers the unhappy debauchee is 'fuddled.' The exact stage of drunkenness is marked and noted down in the corners of the mouth and eyes, and the impotent elevation of the eyebrow."

Cruikshank was a very young man when Gillray gave way to drunkenness, and sank under it. His last work appeared in 1811.*

Mr. Ruskin, in his Appendix to his Modern Painters

* "Gillray's character affords a sad example of the reckless imprudence that too frequently accompanies talent and genius. For many years he resided in the house of his publisher, Mr. Humphrey, by whom he was most liberally supplied with every indulgence; during this time he produced nearly all his most celebrated works, which were bought up with unparalleled eagerness, and circulated not only over all England, but most parts of Europe. Though under a positive engagement not to work for any other publisher, yet so great was his insatiable desire for strong liquors, that he often etched plates for unscrupulous persons, cleverly disguising his style and handling." —*Robert Chambers' Book of Days*, vol. i., p. 724.

on "Modern Grotesque," insists that "all the real masters of caricature deserve honour in this respect, that their gift is peculiarly their own—innate and incommunicable. No teaching, no hard study, will ever enable other people to equal, in their several

Moving off with the *time*.—From "More Mornings at Bow Street."

ways, the works of Leech or Cruikshank; whereas the power of pure drawing is communicable, within certain limits, to every one who has good sight and industry. I do not, indeed, know how far, by devoting the attention to points of character, caricaturist skill may be laboriously attained; but certainly the power

is, in the masters of the school, innate from their childhood.

"Further. It is evident that many subjects of thought may be dealt with by this kind of art, which are inapproachable by any other, and that its influence over the popular mind must always be great; hence it may often happen that men of strong purpose may rather express themselves in this way (and continue to make such expression a matter of earnest study), than turn to any less influential, though more dignified, or even more intrinsically meritorious, branch of art. And when the powers of quaint fancy are associated (as is frequently the case) with stern understanding of the nature of evil, and tender human sympathy, there results a bitter or pathetic spirit of grotesque, to which mankind at the present day owe more thorough moral teaching than to any branch of art whatsoever.

"In poetry the temper is seen, in perfect manifestation, in the works of Thomas Hood; in art it is found both in various works of the Germans—their

finest and their least thought of; and more or less in the works of George Cruikshank, and in many of the illustrations of our popular journals."

In a note, Ruskin adds: "Taken all in all, the works of Cruikshank have the most sterling value of any belonging to this class produced in England."

Let us now turn once more to Thackeray's admirable estimate of his old friend :—

"We have heard only profound persons talk philosophically of the marvellous and mysterious manner in which he has suited himself to the time—*fait vibrer la fibre populaire* (as Napoleon boasted of himself), supplied a peculiar want felt at a peculiar period, the simple secret of which is, as we take it, that he, living amongst the public, has with them a general wide-hearted sympathy; that he laughs at what they laugh at; that he has a kindly spirit of enjoyment, with not a morsel of mysticism in his composition; that he pities and loves the poor, and jokes at the follies of the great; and that he addresses all in a perfectly sincere and manly way. To be greatly successful as a profes-

sional humourist, as in any other calling, a man must be quite honest, and show that his heart is in his work. A bad preacher will get admiration and a hearing with this point in his favour, where a man with three times his acquirements will only find indifference and coldness. Is any man more remarkable than our artist for telling the truth after his own manner? Hogarth's honesty of purpose was as conspicuous in an earlier time, and we fancy that Gillray would have been far more successful and more powerful, but for that unhappy bribe, which turned the whole course of his humour into an unnatural channel. Cruikshank would not for any bribe say what he did not think, or lend his aid to sneer down anything meritorious, or to praise any thing or person that deserved censure. When he levelled his wit against the Regent, and did his very prettiest for the Princess, he most certainly believed, along with the great body of the people whom he represents, that the Princess was the most spotless, pure-mannered darling of a Princess that ever married a heartless debauchee of a

Prince Royal. Did not millions believe with him, and noble and learned lords take their oaths to her Royal Highness's innocence? Cruikshank would not stand by and see a woman ill-used, and so struck in for her rescue, he and the people belabouring with all their might the party who were making the attack, and determining, from pure sympathy and indignation, that the woman must be innocent because her husband treated her so badly.

"To be sure, we have never heard so much from Mr. Cruikshank's own lips, but any man who will examine these odd drawings, which first made him famous, will see what an honest, hearty hatred the champion of woman has for all who abuse her, and will admire the energy with which he flings his wood-blocks at all who side against her."*

Thackeray dwells lovingly on Cruikshank's success as a delineator of children and the humours of childhood; and particularly on his inimitable illustrations

* *Westminster Review*, 1840.

to children's books. This is Cruikshank's own kingdom, by a right of genius which none can dispute.

"How," exclaims Thackeray, "shall we enough praise the delightful German nursery tales, and Cruikshank's illustrations of them? We coupled his name with pantomime awhile since, and sure never pantomimes were more charming than these. Of all the artists that ever drew, from Michael Angelo upwards and downwards, Cruikshank was the man to illustrate these tales, and give them just the proper admixture of the grotesque, the wonderful, and the graceful." And further on the author of "Vanity Fair" exclaims: "Look at one of Mr. Cruikshank's works, and we pronounce him an excellent humourist. Look at all, his reputation is increased by a kind of geometrical progression, as a whole diamond is a hundred times more valuable than the hundred splinters into which it might be broken would be. A fine rough English diamond is this about which we have been writing."

And so Thackeray concludes a paper on his friend,

whom he had not forgotten many years after when he exhibited the "Triumph of Bacchus."

Let us now glance at the childhood and early manhood of this famous Englishman. We shall see that he owed nothing to Fortune. The coarse and dangerous school of obscurity was his. The splendid powers which he had received from nature, if they grew wild, grew strong also. He was the son of Isaac Cruikshank, a struggling Scotch artist, who never won high fame nor commanded rich rewards; a fair painter in water-colours and a successful grotesque etcher, when the satirical grotesque was a marketable produce. Isaac Cruikshank * was the son of a Lowlander, who held at one time an appointment in the Customs at Leith. He married the daughter of a naval officer—a Highlander from Inverary, according to Dr. Charles Mackay; to whom George Cruikshank

* The Cruikshanks belonged to Aberdeenshire, where they are still a numerous sept. Probably some branches of them may be found in the "Poll-Book of Aberdeenshire." William Cruikshank, a celebrated anatomist, flourished in Edinburgh toward the close of last century.

often boasted that although he had the misfortune to be born in London, his blood was a mixture of the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland. He boasted that his grandfather had fought at Culloden, and had become thereby impoverished. The child of a Lowland father, and of a stern, resolute Highland mother; bred in London, with London streets for the fairyland of his young imagination; inured as a child to task-work in that busy house, or factory, in Dorset Street; and his boyhood cast in the days of great deeds and momentous events calculated to stir his blood to fever heat; the genius of George Cruikshank budded and blossomed betimes. His first pencilling is dated 1799: it was executed in his seventh year! It may be said that his baby fingers played with the graving tool. While a boy, he illustrated children's penny books for the children's publisher, James Wallis, as well as comic valentines, and Twelfth Night characters, for Chappell, the then publisher of *London Cries*, Knight, Baldwyn, and others.

Isaac Cruikshank, his father, was, as I have said, a

fairly known water-colour painter and etcher of popular subjects. Lottery tickets were his "pot boilers"—for there was a steady demand for designs for these. But, with poorer skill than his gifted son, he fed the popular appetite for pictures of the time. A grim outline of the guillotine, a cramped representation of the execution of Louis XVI. in 1793, were among the sterner subjects to which his name is attached.

"Isaac Cruikshank," says Mr. Wright, "was among the most active, and certainly the most successful, of the caricaturists of the beginning of the present century;" and he adds, that Isaac's works were equal to those of his contemporaries, after Gillray and Rowlandson. One of the earliest examples, bearing the well-known initials I. C., was published on the 10th of March, 1794. Mr. Wright is mistaken in saying that this was the year of his illustrious son George's birth; for George was then two years old. Isaac published many plates that made a noise in the world, as "The Royal Extinguisher" (1795), in which Pitt is represented putting out the flame

of Sedition; "Billy's Raree-Show;" Fox as "The Watchman of the State;" and "A Flight across the Herring Pond," published in 1800.* Mr. Wright says: "The last caricature I possess, bearing the initials of Isaac Cruikshank, was published by Fores, on the 19th of April, 1810, and is entitled 'The Last Grand Ministerial Expedition.' The subject is the riot on the arrest of Sir Francis Burdett, and it shows that Cruikshank was at this time caricaturing on the Radical side in politics."

Isaac Cruikshank, after his establishment in London, married Miss Mary MacNaughton, a young Scottish lady from Perth, whose family owned a small property there. Her parents dying young, she was brought

* England and Ireland are separated by a rough sea, over which a crowd of Irish "patriots" are flying, allured by the prospect of honours and rewards. On the Irish shore, a few wretched natives, with a baby and a dog, are in an attitude of prayer, expostulating with the fugitives. . . . On the English shore, Pitt is holding open the "Imperial Pouch," and welcoming them.—*Wright's History of Caricature and Grotesque.*

up by the Countess of Orkney, from whom she concealed her marriage with an artist, as a *mésalliance* the Countess would not approve. She was a lady of strong will and temper, while Isaac, her husband, was of quiet, meditative temperament. Robert, the eldest son of the marriage, was like his father, while George showed the hot head and imperious temper of his mother.*

Isaac Cruikshank was living in Duke Street, Bloomsbury, when his sons Robert, Isaac, and George were born, the latter on the 27th of September, 1792, the former on the same date in 1789. While the boys were in their early infancy, the family removed to 117, Dorset Street, Salisbury Square, a house commodious enough for the admission of lodgers, one of whom was Mungo Park. Among the constant visitors were Dr.

* The daughter, Eliza, inherited the family skill in drawing. She designed the well-known caricature of the Four Prues—High Prue, Low Prue, Half Prue, and Full Prue, which was etched by her brother George in his boldest style. She died young, of consumption.

Pettigrew, the family doctor (known afterwards as Mummy Pettigrew), and George Dawe, R.A., to whom Isaac Cruikshank had given lessons as a poor boy. It was a busy establishment. Isaac Cruikshank worked at his etchings on copper, while his wife coloured the plates, pressing her two boys into the service at a very early age. This Mary Cruikshank, if a hot-tempered, was a frugal and industrious wife, and an excellent mother. She used to boast how she had managed to save a thousand pounds, and at the same time to bring up her children in God-fearing ways (laying her hand on her Bible she said she knew Jerusalem as well as she knew Camden Town), sending them regularly to the Scotch Church in Crown Court, Drury Lane. She was a trifle too strict and serious, according to her husband; and often when the clergyman from Crown Court was coming to spend the evening, he would escape to the Ben Jonson Tavern in Shoe Lane, where he is said to have spent more time than was good for him.

Her boys used to relate, as illustrative of their

mother's "Highland temper," that on one occasion, when a tradesman had sent her two bad eggs, she told them to return with them and "throw them at the rascal's head." This command was obeyed to the letter, to the great delight of the pugnacious youngsters. The two brothers were educated at an elementary school at Edgeware, but they were very early cast into the rude business of life. Robert went to sea as a midshipman in the East India Company's service, his head full of the wonderful stories he had heard from his mother's lodger, Mungo Park.

He made only one voyage. On his way home, having gone on shore at St. Helena in command of a boat's crew, and a storm having suddenly arisen, he was left behind, and reported to be lost. He was passed home in a whaler, after having endured severe privations on the island; and would relate that the only noteworthy incident of the homeward voyage was the speaking with a vessel which gave the news of the battle of Trafalgar. When he presented himself in Dorset Street, Salisbury Square, he was aston-

ished at the frantic excitement of his brother George on opening the door. The family were in mourning for him.

The elder brother found that George had made wonderful progress in his art in the three years during which he had been at sea. Robert had meantime lost ground as an artist, and had contracted bad habits. Isaac Cruikshank was at this time etching theatrical portraits and scenes for a publisher named Roach, who dwelt in Vinegar Yard, Drury Lane. This connection drew the two sons into an acquaintance with Edmund Kean, then an obscure player, and the three got up an amateur performance of "Blue Beard" in Roach's kitchen, Kean taking the principal part, Robert and George Cruikshank playing the two brothers, and Miss Roach appearing as Fatima. The copper was the tyrant's castle.*

* In 1855, shortly before his death, Robert Cruikshank made a water-colour sketch of the scene, for a life of Edmund Kean, projected, but never written, by Mr. Michael Nugent, a *Times* parliamentary reporter.

The Cruikshanks—but particularly Robert—remained on intimate terms with Kean after he had become famous. The tragedian, on one occasion, to divert them, threw somersaults on the stage of Drury Lane after playing Richard. Robert drew portraits of Kean in most of his characters.*

On the death of their father the two brothers kept on the house in Dorset Street, with their mother and sister, working together. They had, after the death of Gillray, the command of the whole field of caricature, supplying nearly all those coloured etchings on copper, on the subjects of the day, which drew crowds about the print-sellers' windows. They were the rough forerunners of H. B.'s pencillings and of Leech's cartoons in *Punch*. The prize-fighter in those days was the popular idol; and the most notorious "bruisers" found their way to the Cruikshank studio on the second floor in Dorset Street, to stand for their portraits. The Cruikshank brothers

* At the sale of Mr. Lacy's Theatrical Library, Robert Cruikshank's theatrical portraits in water-colours fetched £200.

were not particular as to sitters, even to murderers.* It was a strange workroom, decorated with the most incongruous ornaments. An undergraduate's cap (the spoil of a town-and-gown riot) upon a human skull with a pipe between the teeth, a sou'wester from Margate, boxing gloves, foils, masks, and weapons of all kinds, proclaimed the wild tastes of the two artists, who generally invited their guests to a bout with the gloves. Both brothers were expert boxers, but George had cultivated the science under a distinguished professor more assiduously than Robert. It was in one of his bouts with this professor that George received a blow on his nose, which, with other taps on the same point, fixed that feature awry for the remainder of his life.

To this strange studio rough old Ackerman, Fores of Piccadilly, and Johnny Fairburn of the Broadway, Ludgate Hill, came with plentiful commissions for both brothers. When Robert was in want of money

* The portrait of Elizabeth Fenning, by I. R. Cruikshank, taken in Newgate, is a very coarse work.

and expected Johnny, he placed an empty purse upon the mantelpiece, marked "unfurnished," and the good-natured old printseller would take it up and replenish it. When Robert married, the family removed to King Street, Holborn; and it was here that the elder brother contrived to get sittings, through a keyhole, of old Mrs. Garrick, in her ninetieth year, while she was paying visits to her friend Miss Cotherly, one of prudent Mrs. Cruikshank's lodgers. The result was a finished, full-length etching upon copper, with the face carefully stippled. It was in portraiture that Robert excelled; and to this branch of his art he devoted himself. When at the height of his success he removed to St. James's Place, St. James's Street, where he established himself as a fashionable artist, carrying on, at the same time, his work as a caricaturist and illustrator.* George, on parting from his brother, went to

* He was, according to his son, "still the pink of fashion, even to designing a hat, a block for which was made at a cost of three guineas, while all other details of costume were treated regardless of cost. George Hibbert commissioned Robert to execute

live with his mother and sister to Claremont Square, Pentonville. On his marriage he removed only a few doors from his old residence, and at 22 and 23, Amwell Street, he remained during the thirty most brilliant years of his life,* as the addresses on some of his best work attest.

When he had, in part, emancipated himself from the bibulous boon companions of his youth, George fell into a regular system of hard work. He breakfasted punctually at eight o'clock, after which he smoked a pipe, and went to work at nine. When biting up plates, he would smoke more in the course of the morning to drive away the fumes of the acid. At twelve he lunched, and then resumed work until

a set of etchings for the Roxburgh Club, at his own price, from one of Boccaccio's tales in the "Decameron." Sixty copies were printed, and the plates were destroyed. The *English Spy*, illustrated by Robert at this time, was edited by Charles Molloy Westmacot, said to be the son of a sweep in Newcastle Court, Strand, named Molloy. He ultimately became the owner of the *Age* newspaper."

* His mother went to live at Finchley, and died at the age of ninety.

three o'clock, when he dined. After dinner he sat, with a jug of porter before him, enjoying his pipe, and talking with any friend who dropped in. His visitors were many. At five he drank tea, and then worked again from six o'clock till nine, when supper concluded the labour of the day, and was the preliminary to pipes and grog.

The establishment in Amwell Street was strengthened, soon after its establishment, by the addition of one Joseph Sleap, the son of the Finchley carrier. Joe was as eccentric as his master. Originally employed as a help in the kitchen and a page in the parlour, he at once began to devour any book that came within his reach. He became a ravenous student of literature. Then he took to water-colour drawing, and in the end made sketches from nature in the neighbourhood (Pentonville was almost in the country in those days), for which he found a brisk sale. His abilities soon caused his promotion from the kitchen to the studio, where he helped to bite up the plates. His devotion, his artistic skill, and the extraordinary

capacity for storing up knowledge which Joe discovered, won his way to George Cruikshank's heart, and he became his confidential friend. The only drawback to Joe was his somnolent habits. He was patient, quiet, undemonstrative—qualities which galled Cruikshank, whose energy was vehement and sleepless. "What would I not give for some of your uncle's devil?" said the carrier's eccentric son to George Cruikshank's young nephew. But Joe went the wrong way to work. He became an opium-eater. He lived and worked, and still read on in a dream. On Cruikshank's recommendation Joe was employed by Thackeray, when he etched his own designs, to bite up. "George," cried the novelist one day, "Joe knows a great deal more than you or I."*

* Another of Cruikshank's journeymen,—Sands, the engraver, who bit up his steel plates for him,—was recommended to Thackeray. But Sands was a difficult man to deal with, and he was dismissed. He rushed to Amwell Street for comfort. He complained bitterly of the treatment he had received, adding that Thackeray owed him for a "glass," a "pint," and a "quart." Cruikshank thought they had been drinking. But the "glass"

Poor Joe's end was a dismal one. He was found one night dead upon a doorstep, poisoned with an overdose of his drug!

The exploits of the wild brothers, while the family lived in Dorset Street, were severely condemned by their strict mother.* Occasionally she even went the length of castigating George, when he returned home in the small hours from fairs or horse-races, or the prize-ring, far from sober; or when he had been emulating the exploits of Tom and Jerry with wild companions. He is described at this early time as gifted with extraordinary animal spirits, and filled with a reckless spirit of adventure, in the dangerous byways of London. What he saw in these days he carefully observed and set down. His field of observation stretched from the foot of the gallows to Greenwich fair; through coal-holes, cider-cellars, cribs,

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was a magnifying one, the "pint," an etching point, and the "quart" a quarto plate!

* "Take the pencil out of my sons' hands," she used to say, 'and they are a couple of boobies."

and prize-fighters' taverns, Petticoat Lane, and Smithfield. Its centre was Covent Garden market, where the young bloods drank and sang and fought under the piazzas, something more than sixty years ago.

Political Caricature. 1812.

1816, "Dominie Sampson," Title-page Vignette to a Chap-book, "Guy Mannering, or the Astrologer."

CHAPTER III.

CRUIKSHANK'S EALY DAYS.

DIRECTLY Isaac Cruikshank's boys could hold a tool they appear to have been apprenticed to the father's art-trade. Robert, the elder, was a spirited worker—perhaps on a level with his father; but the handsome, bright-eyed younger son, George, soon gave signs of a deeper original power of observation, and of surprising humour and fancy, that drew him away from sire

and brother, and gave him a strong and distinct individuality.

"George" (says Mr. Sala) "had both the *Geist* and the *Natur-gabe.* Long before he was out of jackets he had learned to draw with facility, symmetry, and precision; and if we recollect right, the collected exhibition of his original drawings, shown at Exeter Hall some years since (1863), comprised some sketches in pencil of 'Coalies' at the old 'Fox under the Hill,' executed in 1799. His manner of handling was, at the first, mainly founded on that of the renowned Gillray, to whose position as a caricaturist, political and social, he ultimately succeeded, although he never exhibited any traces of Gillray's vices—revolting grossness, and at last a downright madness in delineation, rivalling that of the *pictor ignotus*, William Blake."

Without unreservedly endorsing Mr. Sala's opinion on Gillray and Blake, I hasten to admit that Cruikshank was, from his manhood onwards, free, with a few exceptions, from their coarseness and wildness. Some of his coarse coloured plates in

"The Scourge," dated 1811, forbid the assertion that he never, even in youth, transgressed the bounds of modesty. He always had, however, a tenderness and grace, an earnestness and a lively sympathy, which were entirely his own. In a few prefatory words to "A Catalogue of a Selection from the Works of George Cruikshank, extending over a period of upwards of sixty years, from 1799 to 1863," he said, in his own whimsical way, "'The George Cruikshank Gallery,' as it is called, originated in consequence of many persons having expressed their belief that G. C., the caricaturist of former days, was the grandfather of the person who produced the 'Worship of Bacchus.' The committee, therefore, who are exhibiting the 'Worship of Bacchus,' requested to have some of my early works, in order to show that they were the production of one and the same person, or to prove, in fact, that I am not my own grandfather."*

* One day, while Dr. B. W. Richardson was engaged at his house in Hinde Street, with an old patient who had been away many years in India, George Cruikshank's card was handed to

It may be that George Cruikshank was in doubt sometimes, in the course of his boyhood, as to the calling or profession he would adopt. We know that he was inclined towards the stage, and delighted in acting to the end of his days; and he was full of military ardour, as we shall presently see. But he had little or no time for dreams. He had his daily bread to win, in his teens, as a designer of "Twelfth Night Characters," and "Lottery Tickets," a rough illustrator of songs, or pictorial delineator of any event or exhibition which excited public attention. He made a drawing of Nelson's funeral car in 1805; in 1809, the O. P. riots at Covent Garden engaged

the doctor. "It must be the grandson, or the son, at any rate, of the great artist I remember as a boy," said the patient. "It is impossible the George Cruikshank of Queen Charlotte's trial-time can be alive!" The doctor asked the vivacious George to come in. He tripped in, in his eighty-fourth year; and when the old officer expressed his astonishment, George exclaimed, "I'll show you whether he's alive!" With this he took the poker and tongs from the grate, laid them upon the carpet, and executed the sword-dance before Dr. Richardson's astonished patient.

his pencil. Even in 1822 he was the popular pictorial commentator, and his needle touched an extraordinary variety of subjects, even to the mermaid which drew crowds in St. James's Street in 1822. His etching of this "disgusting sort of a compound animal, which contains in itself everything that is odious and disagreeable," is to be found reproduced in "The Book of Days." He even tried his hand at scene painting, in the days when his friends Clarkson, Stanfield, and David Roberts were at Drury Lane.

"His art in its better developments being essentially dramatic," Miss Alice Thompson* has truly remarked, "the love of the actual drama was not wanting. In his circumstances, however, to become an actor meant to become a strolling player; while he was hesitating about the possibility of embarking upon such a career, he obtained a commission to paint a drop-scene for Drury Lane Theatre, on the stage of which he was ambitious of appearing. The bit of scene-painting in

* "A Bundle of Rue." George Cruikshank. *The Magazine of Art*, March 1880.

question was a caricature of Sir William Curtis, and the young artist depicted him looking over a bridge, and did it with so much humour that the picture brought down the house. George Cruikshank's success in scene-painting led to more employment of the same kind; he shared, as an artist, the theatrical beginnings of Stanfield and David Roberts."

George Cruikshank was "soldier-struck" as well as "stage-struck." He was a pugnacious man. The Rev. Charles Rogers, who knew him in his old age, tells me that he used to regret to him that he had not entered the army. Describing his recollections of England at the time of the threatened French invasion, he gives us some of his military reminiscences and aspirations as a child.*

"Great Britain at this time might well be compared to the state of a beehive when its inmates have been disturbed by accident or an intruder; and

* "A Popgun fired off by George Cruikshank, in defence of the British Volunteers of 1803, against the uncivil attack upon that body by General W. Napier, etc." Illustrated with cuts.

we might quote Dibdin's song of 'The Tight Little Island,' and say,—

'Buzz was the word of the island.'

Every town was, in fact, a sort of garrison; in one place you might hear the 'tattoo' of some youth learning to beat the drum; at another place some march or national air being practised upon the fife, and every morning at five o'clock the bugle-horn was sounded through the streets, to call the volunteers to a two hours' drill from six to eight, and the same again in the evening; and then you heard the pop, pop, pop, of the single musket, or the heavy sound of the volley, or distant thunder of the artillery; and then sometimes you heard the 'Park' and the 'Tower,' guns firing to celebrate some advantage gained over the enemy. As soon as these volunteers were taught (by the *regulars*) how to load and fire, they were set to practise 'ball firing;' and when these regiments were thought to be pretty well instructed in all points, they were inspected by general officers; and if the inspect-

ing officer thought them sufficiently advanced, a day was appointed, and they were marched off to a 'grand review.'

"I was but a boy—a little boy at that time—but I had a sharp critical eye for all those military movements, and used to be much amused at the occasional blunders of the 'awkward squads;' and as I often had the opportunity of witnessing the regulars 'exercise,' I judged of and compared the evolutions of 'my father's regiment' by this standard; and I remember feeling considerable pride and pleasure when I saw the 'Loyal St. Giles's and St. George's Bloomsbury Volunteers' wheel out of the old gate of 'Montague House' (then the British Museum, and the site of the present building), to march to Hyde Park to be reviewed, where they acquitted themselves in so soldier-like a manner as to gain the approbation of the reviewers, and, of course, of themselves.

"When Napoleon I. was once speaking of the people of Great Britain, he contemptuously called them 'a nation of shopkeepers.' This was told to George III.,

and when he reviewed the Metropolitan Volunteers in Hyde Park, and saw one fine sturdy body of infantry after another march past, and then the splendid regiments of cavalry—the City of Westminster Light Horse, commanded by the Prince of Wales, the City Light Horse, and other equally fine corps, mounted upon as fine horses as England could produce, and that is saying something—he was indeed much pleased by their martial appearance and general bearing, and, turning to the general officers around him, he exclaimed, in the pride of his good-natured heart, 'Shopkeepers! shopkeepers! shopkeepers!'"

In the warmth of his military ardour, Cruikshank says: "As my father served as a private in the 'St. Giles's and St. George's Bloomsbury Volunteers,' and as my late brother Robert, at a later period, served in the rifle company of the 'Loyal North Britons' (in which corps he rose to the rank of sergeant), and further, as I (at a still later date) carried a rifle in the same company, I think that I have a right, and that I ought to stand forth for the defence of the military

character of my relations, my friends, and my brethren-in-arms, and myself." * He was even ready to take the command of the army. Having severely criticised the military authorities of the day, he says: "This is a very different style of thing to what *I* would adopt, if I had the command of our forces; but as that is not likely to be the case (although I flatter myself that I am quite capable of doing so), I must leave all these matters to our Royal Commander-in-Chief and his staff of general officers. People will here, perhaps, smile at what they would term my vanity, and wish to know upon what grounds I would dare to take so responsible a position; to which I reply, that I had, as before stated, acquired as a child almost all the discipline necessary for an infantry soldier, completing when a youth this part of my military education by

* General Sir W. Napier had aroused Cruikshank's wrath by writing a letter to the *Times*, in which he described the volunteers as "mere mimics, without solidity to support the regular army;" as "offering points of weakness to the enemy," and as irregulars who, should they come in contact with an enemy, "would have had to trust to their legs."

serving as a volunteer. This early acquaintance with soldiering led me to study the sword exercise; and understanding the small-sword, and the broadsword as well, and the use of firearms, I consider myself able (with a properly trained horse) to mount at a moment's notice, to act as an irregular cavalry man; and having paid some attention to gunnery on land, and attended the gunnery practice on board Her Majesty's ship *The Excellent*, in Portsmouth Harbour, I could lend a hand to work a gun afloat, or, of course, as Horse-Marine,—or, if ashore, as an artilleryman; and besides all this, I have—although it is not generally known, nor do I lay too much stress upon it—yet *I have served in the Militia*—by *substitute;* but as this was in a time of peace, and as my representative was such a queer, uncommon, wild-looking fellow—one who, I am sure, would not hurt anybody—I don't think any harm was done in any way except the picking of my pocket for the 'bounty.' But as *they* '*drew*' me for the Militia, I in return *drew them*—'*Drawing for the Militia*'—as may be seen in 'My Sketch Book.'"

The humourist peeps through the military reformer and the military boaster, as he peeped always through Cruikshank's many grotesque masqueradings. Even his earnestness took grotesque forms. He was extravagant in all his expressions, a caricaturist even

"Shillahoo! Who durst tread upon that? Is it yerself durst set yer ugly foot upon it?"—From "More Mornings at Bow Street."

when most impressive. His soldiering forcibly reminds the spectator and the reader of Bobadil; albeit George Cruikshank was brave as a lion, and in downright earnest. He had the simplicity, also the faith, of Don Quixote.

He tells the story of his military career as a boy

and a young man, and how it was brought to a close, in his own peculiar fashion:—

"Not only did the men in 1803 form themselves into regiments of volunteers, but the boys of that day did so likewise, and my brother (of whom I have already spoken), and who was my elder by three years, formed one of these juvenile regiments, and appointed *himself* the colonel. We had our drum and fife, our 'colours,' presented by our mammas and sisters, who also assisted in making our accoutrements. We also procured small 'gun-stocks,' into which we fixed mop-sticks for barrels, kindly polished by 'Betty' with a *tinge* of blacklead, to make 'em look like *real* barrels.

"The boys watched their fathers 'drill'; and 'as the old cock crows the young one learns,' so we children followed in the steps of our papas, and we were ready for inspection quite as soon as our elders, and could march in good order, to have *our* 'Field-day,' from Bloomsbury Church to the fields, where Russell and Tavistock Squares now stand. This account of my 'playing at soldiers' may appear to

be rather trifling and nonsensical, but just see what it has done for me. Why, by my learning the manual exercise with this mop-stick gun, when a boy, and at the same time learning how to 'march,' 'countermarch,' and to 'mark time,' to 'wheel' and to 'face,' etc., IT HAS MADE ME—AYE, ME, G. C., FIT AND ABLE TO HANDLE A MUSKET OR A RIFLE, AND FALL INTO THE RANKS OF AN INFANTRY REGIMENT AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE. I make this assertion with confidence; for when as a young man I joined a rifle company, I found that I required *no drilling;* the only additional knowledge necessary was to understand the 'calls' of the bugle and whistle, which, with the rifles, are used instead of the '*word* of command' when skirmishing; and I can say, having previously learned to prime, and load, and fire, and hit a mark, that I was a tolerable rifleman one week after I had entered. The fact is, that learning the military exercise when young is like learning to dance, or to ride, or to row, or to swim, or to fence, or to box, at an early age; and when these very important parts of male education or training

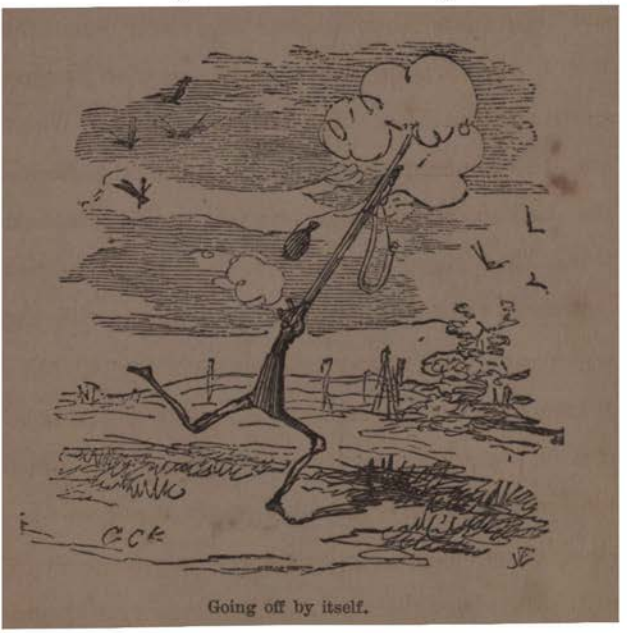
are acquired in boyhood, *they are never forgotten.* . . . We all know that early pleasurable impressions, as well as very disagreeable ones, are never effaced; and as 'playing at soldiers' does strongly engage the youthful mind, it is quite clear, as in my case, that if *every boy* in these realms was taught the military exercise as I was, they would, as they grew up to manhood, require little or no training to make them sufficiently effective for defence; and if the whole male population of this country capable of bearing arms were to be in such a condition, in such 'fighting order,' there NEVER WOULD BE ANY FIGHTING AT ALL, for no nation, or all the nations combined together, would ever even so much as dream of invading a country where they would have a difficulty of landing *hundreds of thousands* of their men, who would have to meet *millions and millions* of well-trained and well-organized men to oppose them, to say nothing of the tossing, and bumping, and scraping they would be likely to get in getting over 'the wooden walls of Old England.'"

Cruikshank describes in his own quaint way how his early military experiences were brought to a close.

"Our regiment, the Loyal North Britons, being commanded by a Royal Duke (H.R.H. the late Duke of Sussex), had the post of honour, next to the Royal troops; and as I had the honour of being present upon that occasion (the Grand Review in Hyde Park, given in honour of the Emperor Alexander and Blucher, after the Allies had entered Paris), I can assure my friends that *we* made a very respectable military appearance, and that the pop, pop, pop of our '*feu de joie*' was as regular as the pop, pop, pop of the regulars. But when *we* marched in review past the Prince Regent, his imperial visitor, and the crowd of general officers, I remember feeling a considerable degree of chagrin at the paltry appearance we made in point of numbers, and wished most heartily that these foreigners could have seen the 'mobs' of volunteers as they had mustered in that park in 1803 and 1804.

"After this review, *our* men retired from the service, or rather, went about their business, little imagining they would ever have been called out again; but they did rally round their colours once more when Napoleon I., or 'Corporal Violet,' as he was then designated, returned from Elba. But after the battle of Waterloo, and the apparent re-establishment of the Bourbons, the British people and the Government seemed to think that there never could be any more risk of invasion; that fighting was quite done with everywhere, and that, at any rate, we were safe to the end of time; that they had been assisting in the completion of some great work, which, being now finished, the volunteers gave back their tools—firearms—to the Government, conceiving that the swords were to be turned into ploughshares, and the spears into pruning-hooks. I was not exempt from this national belief; and, as the *war* was over, I exchanged my rifle for a fowling-piece, and this I unfortunately lent, with the powder-flask and shot-belt, to a friend of mine who was going into the country a-shooting. I do not

know whether my friend 'let off' the gun, but this I do know, that my fowling-piece '*went off*,' and that it never came back again! There is nothing remarkable,



Going off by itself.

perhaps, in 'firearms' going off; but, strange as it may appear, I believe sometimes that books, prints, coins, bank-notes, hats, and even umbrellas, have been known to go off in the same sort of way."

And so, with a joke, and a drawing of the fowling-

piece running away and firing away at the same moment, Cruikshank took leave of his first bout at soldiering. We shall find him no less ardent some forty years later.

One day, in his early volunteer days, when passing down Ludgate Hill in his striking uniform, of which a tall feather and tight green trousers were the conspicuous features, he was laughed at, and followed by some men and boys. He turned upon them and singled out the chief aggressor. A ring was formed in the street, and Private Cruikshank gave his assailant a sound thrashing, treating his second to a pot of beer afterwards by way of acknowledgment.* Robert Cruikshank was even more smitten with soldiering than George, and the weakness remained with him to the end of his life. George jocularly dubbed

* Robert Cruikshank, who was sergeant in the same corps with his brother, could not withstand the gratification of paying a visit in uniform to the ladies' boarding school at Bromley, where he gave lessons, and on the following day his further services were dispensed with.

Robert "the maj*ar*!" Among the "majar's" military exploits was that of exchanging his frock-coat with a Grenadier, in the course of a tipsy frolic, and finding himself ultimately before the magistrates at Bow Street, charged with being in possession of His Majesty's property, and under the necessity of paying a fine of £5.

The military ardour of the brothers had extravagant outbursts occasionally, even when they were middle-aged men. George was a Tory, and Robert was a Republican. In 1848, after the fall of Louis Philippe, Robert called on his brother to tell him the glorious news that a republic had been established in France, and that the Republican legions would assuredly put an end to Russian tyranny. A very hot discussion ensued, in which Robert declared that he was ready to lead the French army to St. Petersburg.

George started in a fury from his seat, and with what a friend used to call his Balfour of Burley expression, roared at Robert, "Then, by G—d, I'll head the Russians, and meet you."

Robert retreated in disgust.

How George Cruikshank was led to study the lower strata of society, and to become the most masterly delineator of the poverty, vice, and vulgarity of London streets, he has himself described in a categorical series of reproofs which he administered by way of introduction to his "Omnibus," to a writer who had misrepresented him. Having described how he had as a boy been saluted with "There goes a copperplate engraver," by a little ragged urchin, when he was carrying a plate home, he replied to the charge that he had studied low life by frequenting the taproom of a miserable public-house in a lane by the Thames, where "Irish coal-heavers, hodmen, dustmen, scavengers, and so forth, were admitted, "to the exclusion of everybody else."

"I shall mention *en passant*, that there are *no* Irish coal-heavers: I may mention, too, that the statement of the author adverted to * is not to be depended

* The author of "Three Courses and a Dessert."

on; were he living, I should show why. And now to the scene of my so-called 'first studies.' There was, in the neighbourhood in which I resided, a low public-house; it has since degenerated into a gin-palace. It was frequented by coal-heavers only; and it stood in Wilderness Lane (I like to be particular), between Primrose Hill and Dorset Street, Salisbury Square, Fleet Street. To this house of inelegant resort (the sign was startling, the 'Lion in the Wood'), which I regularly passed in my way to and from the Temple, my attention was one night especially attracted by the sounds of a fiddle, together with other indications of festivity; when, glancing towards the tap-room window, I could plainly discern a small bust of Shakspeare placed over the chimney-piece, with a short pipe stuck in its mouth. This was not clothing the palpable and the familiar with golden exhalations from the dawn, but it was reducing the glorious and immortal beauty of Apollo himself to a level with the commonplace and vulgar. Yet there was something not to be quarrelled with

in the association of ideas to which that object led. It struck me to be the perfection of the human picturesque. It was a palpable meeting of the Sublime and the Ridiculous; the world of Intellect and Poetry seemed thrown open to the meanest capacity; extremes had met; the highest and the lowest had united in harmonious fellowship. I thought of what the great poet had himself been, of the parts that he had played, and the wonders he had wrought within a stone's throw of that very spot; and feeling that even he might have well wished to be there, the pleased spectator of that lower world, it was impossible not to recognise the fitness of the pipe. It was only the pipe that would have become the mouth of a poet in that extraordinary scene, and without it, he himself would have wanted majesty and the right to be present. I fancied that Sir Walter Raleigh might have filled it for him. And *what* a scene was that to preside over and contemplate! What a picture of life was there! It was *all* life! It simple words, I saw, on approaching the window,

and peeping between the short red curtains, a swarm of jolly coal-heavers! Coal-heavers all, save a few of the fairer and softer sex—the wives of some of them—all enjoying the hour with an intensity not to be disputed, and in a manner singularly characteristic of the tastes and propensities of aristocratic and fashionable society; that is to say, they were 'dancing and taking refreshments.' They only did what their 'betters' were doing elsewhere. The living Shakspeare, had he been, indeed, in the presence, would but have seen a common humanity working out its objects, and have felt that the *omega*, though the last in the alphabet, has an astonishing sympathy with the *alpha* that stands first.

"This incident, I may be permitted to say, led me to study the characters of that particular class of society, and laid the foundation of scenes afterwards published. The locality and the characters were different, the spirit was the same. Was I, therefore, what the statement I have quoted would lead anybody to infer I was, the companion of dustmen, hod-

men, coal-heavers, and scavengers? I leave out the 'and so forth' as superfluous. It would be just as fair to assume that Morland was the companion of pigs, that Liston was the associate of louts and footmen, or that Fielding lived in fraternal intimacy with Jonathan Wild."

Further on he protests that he was not in the habit, as charged, with sitting at his window on Sundays, to observe the patrons of the "Vite Condick Ouse" on the way to that popular place of entertainment.

In 1870 he wrote the following account of himself and his family to Mr. Reid, while this gentleman was preparing the great collection of his work, which was published in three volumes by Messrs. Bell and Daldy:

"In the compiling of such a list as this, it is not at all surprising that there should be errors, particularly when we look at the fact of there being three in one family (a father and two sons), all working in similar styles, and upon the same sort of subjects. My father, Isaac Cruikshank, was a designer and etcher, and engraver, and a first-rate water-colour draughtsman.

My brother, Isaac Robert, was a very clever miniature and portrait painter, and was also a designer and etcher, and your humble servant likewise a designer and etcher.

"When I was a mere boy, my dear father kindly allowed me to *play* at *etching* on some of his copper plates, little bits of shadows, or little figures in the background, and to assist him a *little* as I grew older, and he used to assist *me* in putting in hands and faces. And when my dear brother Robert (who in his latter days omitted the Isaac) left off portrait painting, and took almost entirely to designing and etching, I assisted him at first to a great extent in some of his drawings on wood and his etchings; and all this mixture of head and hand work has led to a considerable amount of confusion, so that dealers or printsellers and collectors have been puzzled to decide which were the productions of the 'I. CK.,' the 'I. R. CK.' (or 'R. CK.'), and the 'G. CK.'; and this will not create much surprise when I tell you that I have myself, in some cases, had a difficulty in deciding in respect to

early *handwork*, done some sixty odd years back, particularly when my drawings, made on wood-blocks for common purposes, were hastily executed (according to price) by the engraver. Many of my first productions, such as halfpenny lottery pictures and books for little children, can never be known or seen, having, of course, been destroyed long ago by the dear little ones who had them to play with."

Three months after marriage:—The *wedding* ring: a symbol of the ring *pugilistic*.—From "More Mornings at Bow Street."

Emerald cut Emerald:—"Are you a *watch*-man?"—From "More Mornings at Bow Street."

CHAPTER IV.

CRUIKSHANK AS A POLITICAL CARICATURIST.

It is recorded that when it was proposed to cast a statue of Sir Robert Peel, the portrait selected as most striking in its resemblance, most faithful to his natural expression, was found in a cartoon by John Leech, published in *Punch*; and that from this drawing the head was modelled. The caricaturist is something more than the mere portrait-painter, who produces his work after a few sittings, and with his model in a set position. Gillray, for example, spent his life in studying his subjects. He had never finished observing

Pitt, and Fox, and Burke, and Sheridan. From his vantage-ground over Mrs. Humphrey's shop in St. James's Street, he caught his victims unawares. He was familiar with every angle and every shade of expression of the public men who were his unconscious sitters.* In the same way, Leech snatched a sitting from Peel and Palmerston, Lord John and Wellington, and had thrust it safely into his waistcoat pocket, in that small note-book which he always carried. And thus the public figures which Sandby and Gillray, Sayer, Bunbury, Rowlandson, the Cruikshanks, the elder Doyle, Leech, Doyle, and Tenniel have fixed with their needles or pencils upon their cartoons, present to us men and manners living as they rose, with a vividness and truth and force the value of which can hardly be exaggerated. Estimate, if you can, the treasure a Gillray of the time of Henry VIII., a Leech of the Commonwealth, a Cruikshank contemporaneous with Shakspeare, would be!

* Pitt, however, paid the great pictorial satirist the compliment of giving him sittings for a serious portrait.

As I have already noted, the art of the caricaturist does not date beyond the time of Hogarth in this country, and he did little in the way of political caricature. What we understand by caricature—that is, pictorial satirical commentary on public events—arose while Gillray was a boy, and when Paul Sandby and Sayer were at the height of their fame. Sayer's caricatures of the early time of George the Third were the models on which the infant genius of Gillray was nursed; as that of George Cruikshank's was fed five-and-twenty years later at the print-shop windows of St. James's Street and Piccadilly, where the crowd stretched even into the roadway, laughing at, and discoursing over, Gillray's last. Cruikshank, although he never had Gillray's academical training, enjoyed the benefit of his master's matchless skill and infinite variety. Gillray unconsciously provided him with a rich inheritance. It has been justly observed that the works of Gillray preserve an entire social revolution; "they form the link uniting the habits, fashions, and manners of the past, with the later generation which inaugurated our present ways of life.'

This later generation it fell to the lot of George Cruikshank to preserve for the edification of posterity. As the etching-needle was trembling and wandering in the hands of the poor demented Gillray, when

"Drooped the spent fingers from the nerveless wrist,"

the keen, flashing eyes of old Isaac Cruikshank's second son were making perpetual rounds of observation in London streets, and his hand was learning that cunning which would enable him to point with his etching-needle the morals that lay thick about him, in strange guises and combinations of never-ending variety, in the great world of London.

Gillray "lived among the subjects of his satire, almost within sight of the palace, whose inmate was aware of the proximity of this Georgian Juvenal; he mixed with the men who possessed the power of suspending his freedom, and was himself as easy of recognition as he had made the faces and figures of those whose caricatures he drew. . . . His eye was quick to detect the weakest point of the best-armed champion:

but the stab was more often playful than cruel. The same quiver furnished shafts for friend and foe alike. Gillray stood alone, and lent his aid to the side which had the greatest need of his weapon. Strengthening and satirizing both factions in turn, to neither side was he a servile champion; his own misfortunes, his gratitude, his necessities, and his weaknesses, were all powerless to confine his satire to the object of mere party advancement. No curb could control his irony. His works are, however, stamped with one attribute—popularity—which is indispensable to lasting success amidst the fluctuations of opinion. His intuitive knowledge of human nature had convinced him of the expediency of securing this advantage; and by recognizing the force of public opinion, he, it may be unconsciously, assumed to a large degree, as his works abundantly prove, the responsibility of shaping and directing it; so far, that is, as the popular voice is subject to individual expression. Gillray and his caricatures enjoyed in their day—allowing for a little excess of colouring to suit the age—the position that

the *Times* and *Punch* now fill. His satire has a speciality: it is often heroic, elevating its object far above the heads of his fellow-men in the semblance of a demi-god, dignified and commanding, even when associated with the attributes of burlesque."*

We find a quality akin to this in the burlesque work of George Cruikshank. He is inclined always to moralize with his etching-needle. He dignifies some of his most fantastic and even repulsive scenes with a lofty purpose. Of gentler disposition, and a less ardent politician than Gillray, Cruikshank's political caricatures are tame when compared with those of the "Georgian Juvenal"; but he had walks and powers which Gillray never approached. Gillray is the rougher, sterner, more audacious genius, reflecting in these qualities the spirit of his times. The son of one of Cumberland's swearing drinking troopers, who had left an arm at Fontenoy, and was an out-pensioner of Chelsea Hospital at twenty-five, Gillray was brought

* Wright.

up in a hardy school. His father, like a true Scot, albeit himself reduced to the position of a sexton, managed to give his boy the rudiments of a sound education. Then seeing that he was for ever poring over the popular plates of Hogarth and the caricaturists of the day, and was nimble with his pencil, he humoured the lad's bent by placing him under a letter engraver; and so the foundation of his future skill as an etcher was laid.* But he was a Bohemian, and went forth gipsying with strolling players. In this wild school he saw many picturesque and striking aspects and contrasts of life which were of vast consequence to him in after-life. When, tired of the barn stage, and impelled irresistibly by his genius, he threw up the hare's foot, and obtained admission to the Royal Academy as a student, he entered with a stout heart upon the career in which he was to find, but never to enjoy, lasting fame. The life of Gillray with Mrs. Humphrey and her maid Betsy is one of the saddest

* It has been surmised that he afterwards studied under Bartolozzi and Ryland.

records of a man of genius I remember. His habits were dissipated, and he kept low company. He resorted to dishonest shifts, it is said, to obtain money for strong drink. But he remained independent in spirit.

If George Cruikshank had the advantage of Gillray in the teaching of a father who held no mean place in that profession which his son was destined to adorn, Gillray had, so far as we know, the better education, and the help of academical training. The knowledge after which Cruikshank longed, with affecting earnestness and sadness, after he had passed the prime of life, and which he even attempted to master in his decline, was Gillray's in his youth. Cruikshank saw his master sink and die a dreadful death, a pensioner on the bounty of his publisher, while he himself advanced to take his place, and indeed those of Bunbury and Rowlandson, and his own father.

"I was cradled in caricature," said Cruikshank to Cuthbert Bede, who adds, "He told me that it was not because he despised academical instruction that he had never availed himself of its salutary discipline, but

simply because the pressure put upon him in his early years was so great that he had no leisure for the lectures or work of an art student."*

Thrown early into the midst of the hard life of London, as we have seen, and made to feel in early boyhood "the bewildering care" of bread-earning, George Cruikshank, with his brother Isaac Robert, had

* I think he told me that he had submitted to Fuseli some drawings from "the round," with a view to secure his entrance into the schools of the Academy; but, any way, I remember that he mimicked Fuseli's voice and manner—which Cruikshank's histrionic talent enabled him to do very cleverly—when the Professor of Painting told him that "if he wished to attend his lectures he would have to fight for a place." As Fuseli's "Lectures on Painting" were delivered and published in 1804, this anecdote would probably refer to that period, when the young artist was twelve years of age, and was already an illustrator of children's books, before he had got into his "teens." This was the preparation for his early work in the *Scourge* and the *Meteor*, and the prelude to those famous political hits in Hone's pamphlets, that brought the artist great fame, but little money; for the publishers only gave him half a guinea for a drawing that produced upwards of fifty pounds for Hone's pocket.—*Cuthbert Bede's "Personal Recollections of George Cruikshank."*

no time save for school culture. He rose from his cradle, and went straight into the bitter fight. For a time he worked by his father's side, and caught very early from his practised hand the cunning tricks of his craft. How the life into which he was thrown quickened and forced the growth of his genius, without impairing its vigour, the long list of his extraordinarily various works bears witness—ranging as it does from his sheet of children's pictures published by Mr. Belch, Newington Butts, in 1803, to his exquisite etching of Fairy Connoisseurs inspecting Mr. Frederick Locker's collection of drawings, which forms the frontispiece to Mr. George William Reid's descriptive catalogue of his works, which is dated 1868.

Referring to George Cruikshank's early work, Mr. Reid observes: "It is to no recent period that the greater part of Cruikshank's work recalls us. In times which to the younger generation are now historic, before the present century was ten years old, he had already commenced the long career which has been spent so industriously in amusing and instructing the public.

And that now (1871), after a life of almost eighty years, there are many to whom the work which occupied the earlier portion of it is practically unknown, is perhaps not surprising; nor can we wonder if many of those who may more strictly be called Cruikshank's contemporaries have become somewhat unmindful of his name, and of the associations which it carries with it."

Somewhat unmindful! In 1875, when a committee was raising money to buy the collection of Cruikshank's works which is now in the London Aquarium, he told one of the members of it that he had not made a shilling by his art for the last ten years. He was quite willing to receive commissions, and he had refused none. None had reached him! Other men, of lesser genius, had arisen and taken his place. He had been voted old-fashioned. His figures were of a time gone by. His women were the grandmothers of the living generation in their youth. He had passed from the shop-windows, where laughing crowds used to greet him, to the portfolios of collectors. How great Cruikshank's popularity once was—that is, his popularity

with the masses of his countrymen—a few of our older readers may recollect. His hits at the follies and vices of the day struck home. He was constantly before the public, and yet the laughing crowds never had too much of him. While Gillray, Rowlandson, and later poor Seymour, fell out of the ranks of his rivals, he constantly advanced in the quality of his work and the dignity of his conceptions. His father died and was forgotten; his brother (albeit a stalwart worker, and of excellent humour into the bargain, as the collection of his works abundantly testifies) faded out of the public mind; while George Cruikshank, in hundreds of original forms of fancy—now humorous, now moral, and now wildly fantastic—presented himself with an ever-deepening welcome to his contemporaries. When the street folk were languidly before the print-shop windows, thoughtful men were looking quietly over their shoulders, perceiving in the artist much more than the caricaturist of the follies of the hour. "The scene may be coarse," says Mr. Reid, "the actors vulgar, their features unnatural; but beneath all this it will

require little attention to discern the real power of the artist, the reality of conception, the firmness and correctness of drawing, the truth and almost living force of expression, especially in the representation of rapid motion, the mastery with which the unexpressed is suggested, the lively humour or the suppressed irony, it may be, which pervades the whole."

Referring to the early times when the young George Cruikshank kept crowds at the print-shop windows, Thackeray exclaims, in 1840: "Knight's, in Sweeting's Alley; Fairburn's, in a court off Ludgate Hill; Hone's, in Fleet Street—bright, enchanted palaces, which George Cruikshank used to people with grinning, fantastical imps, and merry, harmless sprites—where are they? Fairburn's shop knows him no more; not only has Knight disappeared from Sweeting's Alley, but, as we are given to understand, Sweeting's Alley has disappeared from the face of the globe. Stop! the atrocious Castlereagh, the sainted Caroline (in a tight pelisse, with feathers in her hand), the 'Dandy of sixty,' who used to glance at us from Hone's friendly windows,—

where are they? Mr. Cruikshank may have drawn a thousand better things, since the days when these

The First Gentleman.—From "Hone's Tracts."

were; but they are to us a thousand times more pleasing than anything else he has done. How we used to believe in them! to stray miles out of the way on

holidays, in order to ponder for an hour before that delightful window in Sweeting's Alley! In walks through Fleet Street, to vanish abruptly down Fairburn's passage, and then make one at his 'charming gratis' exhibition. There used to be a crowd round the window in those days of grinning, goodnatured mechanics, who spelt the songs, and spoke them out for the benefit of the company, and who received the points of humour with a general sympathising roar. Where are these people now? You never hear any laughing at H. B.; his pictures are a great deal too genteel for that—polite points of wit, which strike one as exceedingly clever and pretty, and cause one to smile in a quiet, gentlemanlike kind of way."

Thackeray insists that there is no mere smiling with Cruikshank. "A man who does not laugh outright is a dullard, and has no heart; even the old dandy of sixty must have laughed at his own wondrous grotesque image, as they say Louis Philippe did, who saw all the caricatures that were made of himself. And there are some of Cruikshank's designs which have the blessed

faculty of creating laughter as often as you see them." The reviewer takes an instance. "There is a fellow in the 'Points of Humour' who is offering to eat up a certain little general, that has made us happy any time these sixteen years; his huge mouth is a perpetual well of laughter—buckets full of fun can be drawn from it. We have formed no such friendships as that boyish one of the man with the mouth. But though, in our eyes, Mr. Cruikshank reached his apogee some eighteen years since, it must not be imagined that such is really the case. Eighteen sets of children have since then learned to love and admire him, and may many more of their successors be brought up in the same delightful faith!"

Few will be disposed to endorse Mr. Thackeray's opinion that George Cruikshank reached his apogee about 1822, at the time when he had his Slap at Slop. Few, I apprehend, will be inclined to admit that his humour, albeit it is his master-quality, his mainspring, his invariable motive-power which sets him working at his best, is his highest gift. He had a perception of tragedy of a very remarkable kind; and he could

realize his solemn meanings with the hand of a master. His early work, however, was nearly all humorous and satirical, even when he fell among the fairies ; and with this we have to do just now.

A chronological *catalogue raisonné* of the works of George Cruikshank would present to the reader a picture of his prodigious activity as an artist, that would be absolutely astonishing. It comprises something over five thousand subjects, ranging from childish drawings of ships, illustrating halfpenny sheets for infants, to finished historical scenes, and the ambitions conceptions of a fine imagination. The first efforts of the boy show an untutored hand, but at the same time an observant eye. The children's lottery pictures, drawn and etched about his twelfth year ("the first," he says, "that George Cruikshank was ever employed to do and paid for"); the etchings of horse-racing and donkey-racing, executed about his thirteenth year, are the original work of a sharp observer. Coal-heavers, Lord Nelson's funeral car, Scavengers reposing, Salisbury Square, Fleet Street (the boy-artist, as we have noted, lived about

this time in Dorset Street); the fashions about the year 1804-5, rude illustrations to popular songs, the Town at Kingsgate, Margate, and Temple

Mr. Cadwallader shouting "murder" out of the window at the studio of Mr. Pimpernel, the portrait-painter; the Pimpernels restraining him, and the scandaliser of the artistic neighbourhood seizing hold of the curtains, and the united strength of the family hanging on to his coat-tails; the curtains give way, and the *posse* of people are sent sprawling.—From "More Mornings at Bow Street."

Gardens—all put forth before the year 1810—are interesting, not for any remarkable artistic merit in them, but as indicating the active intelligence and

alert life of the boy. Directly afterwards we have distinct evidence of the latent whim, humour, and fancy which were to carry young Cruikshank to a place in the art history of his country, equal at least to that of the poor demented genius who was wearing out his remnant of life in old Mrs. Humphrey's shop, and who was about to make his final appearance, dishevelled and unclad, before his wondering customers, on the eve of his death. Colonel Patty-pan and Sir John Sugarstick (1808 or 1809), Metropolitan Grievances (1811-12), Double Bass, Proposals for Practical Duets, adapted to any instrument (1811); Matthews the Comedian, singing a song in a piece called "The Beehive" (1812); Sir Francis Burdett taken from his house; Bonaparte, being an illustration to a song sung at the Surrey Theatre by Mr. Elliston (1811), will reward examination by the student of Cruikshank's genius, as affording distinct germs of the various powers of his mind at a later time. Colonel Pattypan and Sir John Sugarstick are essentially Cruikshankian in their humour.

Between 1811 and 1816 we have to note rapid strides in strength, in range of experience, and development of sympathy with the progress of the world. Feeling and sentiment underlie nearly all Cruikshank's creations. Within this interval Cruikshank broke ground, and made a stand as a political caricaturist. He began to make his mark as a satirical illustrator in the *Meteor* (1813). For this "Monthly Censor" George Cruikshank drew the cover. The allegorical design represents a meteor personified by a humorous little fellow, bearing a lantern, and flying through space. Beneath him Satire holds up a mirror to Folly; and a champion shielded by a "free press," armed with Truth and Justice, protects himself against Licentiousness, Fraud, and Hypocrisy. The projectors of the *Meteor*, it will be seen, meant well. National Frenzy, or John Bull and his Doctors, preparing John Bull for General Congress; Tabitha Grunt on the Walking Hospital; Napoleon's Trip from Elba to Paris, and from Paris to St. Helena, "A Swarm of Bees hiving in the Imperial Carriage! who would have thought it?" and, finally,

the coloured etching of the Battle of Waterloo,—are coarsely executed in the style of Isaac and Robert Cruikshank, and of Rowlandson; but they are remarkable for that power of telling a story, and of concentrating every figure and detail of a picture upon the effect or emotion to be produced, for which Cruikshank in his prime was unrivalled. The progress is continuous to 1820; and the work thrown off becomes prodigious. Besides illustrations of the O. P. Riots at Covent Garden Theatre (1819), fashionable portraits, and other haphazard work, he produced "The Humourist" (1820)—his first remarkable separate work—in which the special and peculiar humorous powers of the artist are developed in forty subjects, drawn from "the living present" in London.

Very early in his career George Cruikshank came in contact with Hone. Of this connection, Dr. K. Shelton Mackenzie has given an account which is stamped with the authority of the artist, since, in "The Artist and the Author," he cites the doctor as armed with information given by himself.

"In the year 1819, while Cruikshank was a mere youth, Mr. William Hone observed his peculiar ability, and determined to exercise it. At that time the political condition of this country was about as unpleasant

From Hone's tract, "The Man in the Moon," 1820. Illustration to Canning's parody of "The Doctor."

and unsatisfactory as it could be. The people clamoured for reform, which the Government steadily and sturdily resisted. Then came the struggle between Right and Might; and, by means of what was called 'the strong

arm of the law,' the right was baffled for the time, albeit not beaten. To add strength to 'the strong arm' in question, the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and six Acts were passed. These were enactments avowedly framed to prevent the expression of public opinion, whether at public meetings or by the medium of the press. The anti-press ordinances of July 1830, which were the means of hurling the Bourbons from the throne of France, were scarcely more tyrannic than the gagging Acts in question. They drove Cobbett to America. We believe that they were especially levelled against him and his plain-speaking 'Register.' They nearly drove the multitude into insurrection. They did resist, but the resistance was in vain; for the Government, believing that 'strong measures' were necessary, did not hesitate to take them. The manner in which the expression of public opinion was sternly and ruthlessly 'put down' at Manchester on the too famous 16th of August, 1819, showed that the Government would have quiet at any cost.

"At this crisis the late Mr. William Hone, who felt

warmly in politics, and had a particular antipathy to Castlereagh, Canning, Sidmouth, and Wellington, determined to try what might be done by bringing the Fine Arts against the Ministry. At that time Canning was chiefly known as a flashy, clever speech-maker, who, after having fought a duel with Castlereagh, had finally returned to the Government, and held a place under him, whose want of capacity he had formerly denounced. Castlereagh himself, with an unhappy notoriety as one who had used unscrupulous means to effect the legislative union between Great Britain and Ireland, was the most unpopular man in the kingdom, not only on that account, but because, scorning the people, he had never concealed his feelings towards them, and had denounced their 'ignorant impatience of taxation.' Lord Sidmouth, to whom Canning had given the *sobriquet* of 'The Doctor' (from his father, Dr. Addington), was peculiarly hated, as Home Secretary, and the ostensible person on whom devolved the ungracious task of employing 'the strong arm of the law' against the multitude; and 'The Duke,' though only

Master-General of the Ordnance, and (if we remember rightly) not in the Cabinet, was disliked at that time, from a general belief that he had recommended that all disaffection should be summarily dealt with, as he had dealt with the French, by cannon-ball and bayonet. The four thus named were the principal members of Lord Liverpool's Cabinet. The Premier himself was a nobody. His fitness for the high and responsible office may be judged from the fact that, some time before he was seized with paralysis, which ended in utter prostration of mind and body, he mentioned to a friend that 'for years he had not opened an official despatch without apprehension and alarm.'

"At such a crisis, and against such a Ministry, William Hone had the boldness to enter the lists. He commenced the publication of cheap pamphlets, in which the literature was below par, and the main reliance was upon the *telling* points of the woodcuts. The first was 'The Political House that Jack Built,' with thirteen cuts after designs by George Cruikshank. This was a parody upon the old nursery rhyme. It *took* amazingly.

Upwards of 100,000 copies sold. George Cruikshank was too young at the time to have any very decided politics, but there is no doubt that then, as now, his sympathies were with the people. At any rate, he did his work well. Every one laughed at what Hone had issued; and though it did the Ministry a thousand times the actual damage which even Cobbett's 'Register' could have done, they could not prosecute it. The Attorney-General would have been laughed out of Court, had he attempted anything of the kind. The light arrows of ridicule went through the armour which a heavier weapon could not enter. All the world laughed; Canning, Castlereagh, and Company enjoying the joke, no doubt, as well as the rest of the people." *

But George Cruikshank was working for William Hone, according to his own showing, in 1817 or 1818, when he produced his "Bank Note not to be Imitated" —a modest work to which he was wont to revert to the end of his life with infinite satisfaction, because he

* The *London Journal*, November 20th, 1847.

attributed to it the withdrawal of Bank of England one-pound notes, and consequently to "the punishment of death" for such offence. In a letter to Whitaker, dated from the Hampstead Road, in 1875, he said, entitling his account "How I put a stop to Hanging":—

"DEAR WHITAKER,—About the year 1817 or 1818 there were one-pound Bank of England notes in circulation, and, unfortunately, there were forged one-pound bank notes in circulation also; and the punishment for passing these forged notes was in some cases transportation for life, and in others DEATH.

"At that time I resided in Dorset Street, Salisbury Square, Fleet Street, and had occasion to go early one morning to a house near the Bank of England; and in returning home between eight and nine o'clock, down Ludgate Hill, and seeing a number of persons looking up the Old Bailey, I looked that way myself, and saw several human beings hanging on the gibbet opposite Newgate prison, and, to my horror, two of these were women; and, upon inquiring what these women had been

hung for, was informed that it was for passing forged one-pound notes. The fact that a poor woman could be put to death for such a minor offence had a great effect upon me—and I at that moment determined, if possible, to put a stop to this shocking destruction of life for merely obtaining a few shillings by fraud; and well knowing the habits of the low class of society in London, I felt quite sure that in very many cases the rascals who forged the notes induced these poor ignorant women to go into the gin-shops to 'get something to drink,' and thus *pass* the notes, and hand them the change.

"My residence was a short distance from Ludgate Hill (Dorset Street); and after witnessing this tragic scene I went home, and in ten minutes designed and made a sketch of this '*Bank-note not to be imitated.*' About half an hour after this was done, William Hone came into my room, and saw the sketch lying upon my table; he was much struck with it, and said, 'What are you going to do with this, George?'

"'To publish it,' I replied. Then he said, 'Will you

BANK RESTRICTION NOTE

Specimen of a Bank Note — not to be imitated.

Submitted to the Consideration of the Bank Directors and the inspection of the Public.

Published by WILLIAM HONE, *Ludgate Hill. Price with the* Bank Restriction Barometer, *One Shilling.*

Engd. at Falconer's Hall.

let me have it?' To his request I consented, made an etching of it, and it was published. Mr. Hone then resided on Ludgate Hill, not many yards from the spot where I had seen the people hanging on the gibbet; and when it appeared in his shop windows, it created a great sensation, and the people gathered round his house in such numbers that the Lord Mayor had to send the City police (of that day) to disperse the CROWD. The Bank directors held a meeting immediately upon the subject, and AFTER THAT they issued *no more* one-pound notes, and so there was *no more hanging for passing* FORGED *one-pound notes;* not only that, but ultimately no hanging, even for forgery. AFTER THIS Sir Robert Peel got a Bill passed in Parliament for the 'Resumption of cash payments.' AFTER THIS he revised the Penal Code, and AFTER THAT *there was not any more hanging or punishment of* DEATH *for minor offences.*

"In a work that I am preparing for publication I intend to give a copy of 'The Bank Note,' as I consider it the most important design and etching that

I ever made in my life; for it has saved the lives of thousands of my fellow-creatures; and for having been able to do this Christian act I am indeed most sincerely thankful, and am, dear friend, yours truly,

"GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

"263, Hampstead Road,

"*December* 12*th*, 1875."

Here it will be seen Cruikshank assumed much. In the catalogue of his collected works, printed by the Executive Committee for securing the collection to the nation, he went further, saying, "So the final effect of *my note* was to stop hanging for all minor offences." The labours of the famous writers and speakers who advocated a milder code went, then, for nothing! It was in connection with William Hone that George Cruikshank suddenly rose to supreme popularity—out rivalling his compeers, including Rowlandson, then poor and dissipated like Gillray, and near his end. Cruikshank's own father's latest political caricature had appeared in 1810.

The work which Cruikshank did for Hone, as "The Political House that Jack Built," "The Political Show-

man at Home," and, lastly, a "Slap at Slop," produced at the time of Queen Caroline's trial, enjoyed an extraordinary popularity, and commanded an immense circu-

From "The Queen's Matrimonial Ladder." "Faded appetite resign'd the victim up to shame."

ation. "The Queen's Matrimonial Ladder"* was a great success. The drawings, "all by Mr. George

* The edition before me, dated 1820, is the thirteenth.

Cruikshank," as Mr. Hone advertised, were severely satirical throughout from the first, where the royal husband drunk, with a broken wine-glass in his hand, the garter falling from his leg, cards and dice and bottles scattered at his feet, and the candles guttering in the sockets, maunders alone to where the fat Adonis is being borne away in a barrow to the "English cry" of "Cats' meat." "Non mi Ricordo" was another squib of this year.

In the "Political Showman at Home," with twenty-four cuts by Cruikshank, the satire is biting, and the ideas are plentiful. The showman, by way of introduction, addresses his readers: "Ladies and gentlemen, walk *up!* walk *up!* and see the CURIOSITIES and creatures—all alive! alive O! Walk *up!* now's your time! *Only* a shilling. Please to walk *up!*

"Here is the strangest and most wonderful *artificial* CABINET in Europe!—made of NOTHING—but *lacker'd brass*, *turnery*, and *papier maché*—all FRET *work* and *varnish*, held together by *steel points!* VERY CRAZY, but very CURIOUS!

"Please to walk in, ladies and gentlemen—it's well worth *seeing!* Here are the most wonderful of all wonderful LIVING ANIMALS. Take care! Don't go within their *reach*—they mind nobody but *me!* A short time ago they got loose, and, with some other *vermin* that came from their *holes and corners*, desperately attacked a LADY OF QUALITY; but, as luck would have it, I and *my 'four-and-twenty men'* happened to come in at the very moment: we *pull'd* away, and prevented 'em from doing her a *serious mischief.* Though they look *tame*, their vicious dispositions are unchanged. If anything was to happen to *me*, they'd soon break out *again*, and show their natural ferocity. *I'm in continual danger from 'em myself;* for if I didn't watch 'em closely, they'd *destroy* ME. As the clown says, 'there never *was* such times,'—so there's no telling what *tricks* they may play *yet.*

"Ladies and gentlemen,—these animals have been exhibited *at Court*, before the king and all the royal family! Indeed, His Majesty is so *fond* of 'em, that he

often sees 'em *in private*, and *feeds* 'em; and he is so diverted by 'em, that he has been pleased to express his gracious approbation of all their *motions*. But they're as cunning as the *old one* himself! Bless you, *he* does not know a thousandth part of their *tricks*. You, ladies and gentlemen, may see 'em just as they are!—the *Beasts* and REPTILES—all *alive! alive* O! and the BIG BOOBY—all *a-light! a-light* O!

"Walk in, ladies and gentlemen! walk in! just a-going to begin. Stir 'em up! stir 'em *up* there with the *long pole*.

"Before I describe the ANIMALS, please to look at the show-cloth opposite——"

The show-cloth is a drawing of the transparency "exhibited by WILLIAM HONE during the ILLUMINATION commencing on the 11th and ending on the 15th of November, 1820, in celebration of the VICTORY obtained by THE PRESS for the LIBERTIES OF THE PEOPLE, which had been assailed in the person of THE QUEEN; the words, 'TRIUMPH OF THE PRESS,' being displayed in variegated lamps as a motto above

it. On the 29th, when *the Queen* went to St. Paul's, it was again exhibited, with Lord Bacon's immortal words, 'KNOWLEDGE IS POWER,' displayed in like manner. The transparency was painted by Mr. GEORGE CRUIKSHANK."

The animals, the beasts and reptiles, are political figures. The crocodile wears the Lord Chancellor's wig, the black rats are lawyers, the scorpion has the Duke's nose and cocked hat.

Cruikshank's illustrations to "Slap at Slop" include ideas enough to enrich half a dozen comic papers of our day. The hitting is hard, but it is never indecent, and it is always on the right side. The author of "The Political House that Jack Built" describes Dr. Slop in downright English: "A minion of ministers, a parasite to despotism throughout the world; public virtue is the object of his unprincipled hate and unsparing abuse Hence there is not a 'public principle' that his mendacity has not 'perverted'; not a man of disinterested public conduct that he has not vilified; not a measure of advantage to the country, emanating from such men,

that he has not derided; not a measure of ministerial profligacy that he has not promoted; not a public job that he has not bolstered; not a public knave that he has not shielded; not an inroad upon the Constitution that he has not widened; not a treason against the people's liberties that he has not advocated; not a sore upon the people's hearts that he has not enlarged." *

Dr. Mackenzie, who saw all these squibs when they first appeared, and remembered the effect they immediately made, bears testimony to their popularity and to their value as political agents:—

"During the excitement of the period, when the sympathy of the multitude was unquestionably in favour of Queen Caroline, and even most of the non-political

* Dr. Stoddart (afterwards Sir John Stoddart), contributor to, and editor of, the *Times*, from about 1810 to 1815 or early in 1816, was attacked as Dr. Slop by Moore. He was removed in consequence of the unmeasured violence and coarseness of his attacks on Napoleon. "The Corsican scoundrel" was a common phrase of his. He started the *New Times*, in opposition to Mr. Walter's journal; but although he conducted it with distinguished ability, it failed, and died after a short life.

"Non mi ricordo!"

portion of society thought that, under existing circumstances, her husband should not have proceeded against her as he did, Hone sent out several other brochures with illustrations by George Cruikshank. That was about six-and-twenty years ago—we saw them at the time, and we have not seen them since—but we have a vivid recollection of every one of them. There was the 'Queen's Matrimonial Ladder,' described as a National Toy, with fourteen step-scenes, and illustrations in verse, and eighteen other cuts. There was 'Non Mi Ricordo,' founded on the convenient forgetfulness of Theodore Majocci, the principal witness against the Queen. There was the 'Political Showman.' There were others which also told well on the public mind, and there is no doubt very greatly influenced it in favour of the Queen and against the King and his ministers. It was impossible for any one to avoid laughing heartily at these publications. There was no mistaking any one character introduced. There was Canning, recognized by his bald head and his peculiar attitude. There was Sidmouth, with an enema-bag in his hand, and thus, if the likeness were

23696

not striking, showed that he was indeed 'The Doctor.' There was Wellington, spare in figure, with his Roman nose and keen, cold eye. There was Castlereagh, duly ticketed as 'Derry-down-triangle,' in memory of the tortures which he allowed to be inflicted in Ireland during the rebellion of 1798. But chief of all was the King. Never before nor since was royalty made so ridiculous. The towering wig, the false whiskers, the padded garments, the enormous bulk, the affectation of juvenility by 'the dandy of sixty' were all inimitable, and not to be mistaken. Lawrence himself might have painted more powerful portraits of the Sovereign, but none half so characteristic as these. We remember one which gave us a back view of 'big George,' with the proportions of his sitting part ludicrously exaggerated, and a star or two stuck upon the narrow tails of the coat, which did not cover the sitting part, as aforesaid. It was impossible to avoid laughing at these—the likeness so good, the figure so correct, the attitude so irresistibly funny. Then the doggrel letter-press, to explain what wanted no explanation. Fancy such a figure stuck in

the centre of the page, with such a running commentary beneath as the following:—

'The dandy of sixty
Who bows with a grace;
The laughable figure
Who wears a crown,
With crosses and badges, and stars of renown,
Who honour and virtue has trampled down,
By insulting the Queen that Jack found.'

'The present generation, examining these things, might wonder at the effect they had upon the public mind; but we can tell them that thousands and ten thousands recollect that the effect was extraordinary. There was a rush and a crush to get them. Edition after edition went off like wildfire. Of some, as many as a quarter of a million copies were sold. Some ran into the thirtieth edition. In 1822, Mr. Hone brought out 'A Slap at Slop and the Bridge Street Gang,' a very cleverly written broadsheet, newspaper size, with fictitious advertisements and intelligence, every line of which had a direct political or personal aim. This had also the advantage of George Cruikshank's illustrations;

and with this concluded his essays in the political line. The system of government improved hereafter, and the artist thought, no doubt, that a wider and better field was before him for the exercise of his talents. Henceforth, then, no one could say of George Cruikshank that he

> 'To party gave up what was meant for mankind.'"

Having said that he believed Cruikshank's attacks upon the Prince Regent to have been his only effort as a party politician,* and referred to his "regular John Bull style of treating the Corsican officer, Boney, as he was pleased always to call Napoleon I.," Thackeray points out how soon the caricaturist's heart relented when the Emperor had yielded to stern fortune. The fine drawing of Louis XVI. trying Napoleon's boots on his gouty feet, is cited in evidence.† But Cruik-

* Which is a mistake. Cruikshank produced some notable political pictures many years later, as the reader will see.

† He even went the length, in one of his temperance speeches, of apologising for his attacks on the Prince Regent.

shank could never master his bull-dog contempt for Frenchmen. This is clear in all his drawings where they appear: in those published in "Life in Paris," as well as the series first issued between 1817 and 1820, and reissued by Mr. McLean, of the Haymarket, in 1835. The Cruikshank Frenchmen are "almost invariably thin, with ludicrous spindle-shanks, pig-tails, outstretched hands, shrugging shoulders, and queer hair and moustachios."

We have merely glanced at the early caricatures of this indefatigable observer and worker. "Long before he was out of jackets," says Mr. Sala, who knew him well in his later years, and understood every facet of his brilliant genius, "he had learned to draw with facility, symmetry, and precision; and if we recollect right, the collected edition of his original drawings, shown at Exeter Hall some years since, comprised some comic sketches in pencil of 'Coalies' at the old 'Fox under the Hill,' executed in the year 1899. . . .

"The earliest bread-winning engagement of young George appears to have been in connection with a

satirical periodical called the *Scourge*, and another light, the *Meteor*, which latter he published conjointly with a man of letters named Earle. In the time of the Russian campaign of 1812 he was very busy with aquatint tableaux of the disaster and shameful flight of Napoleon I., whom he always heartily hated; and in the Waterloo year he 'illustrated' a comic song, sung 'every night with tremendous applause' at the old Surrey Theatre, in which the final downfall of the Corsican usurper and tyrant was narrated in a style which would have delighted M. Lanfray. But it was in 1820 that George first made a decided hit." This, as illustrator of the Hone publications, the literary portion of which was worthless. Of "that strange, wayward man, William Hone," first bookseller and writer of lampoons and parodies of the Litany and Church catechism, and in the end antiquary and mild collector of folk-lore, Cruikshank said, in the fragment of his autobiography which opens his "Omnibus," in reply to a remark that he had once been on terms, not only of intimacy, "but

of warm friendship," with "the most noted infidel of his day."

The proprietor, Earl, was an unprincipled man, who persuaded George Cruikshank to put his name to a bill. When it fell due, the drawer was in the Fleet prison. The acceptor's mother was not a lady to take such a deception lightly. She repaired to the Fleet, but obtained no satisfaction from the debtor. The editor of the *Scourge*, "Jack," or "Mad" Mitford, was worthy of the proprietor. He had been an officer in the navy, but fell through infamous conduct to be the rhymester of running patterers. His principal work, "Johnny Newcome in the Navy," was written in the gravel-pits near Bayswater, where he had hidden, and whither his publisher sent him a shilling daily, to buy gin and cheese, in return for "copy." He died in St. Giles's workhouse.

"What Mr. Hone's religious creed may have been at that time, I am far from being able to decide; I was too young to know more than that he seemed deeply read in theological questions, and, although unsettled

in his opinions, always professed to be a Christian. I knew also that his conduct was regulated by the strictest morality. He had been brought up to detest the Church of Rome, and to look upon the 'Church of England' service as little better than popish ceremonies; and with this feeling he parodied some portions of the Church service for purposes of political satire. But with these publications *I had nothing whatever to do;* and the instant I heard of their appearance, I entreated him to withdraw them. That I was his friend is true; and it is true, also, that among his friends were many persons, not more admired for their literary genius, than esteemed for their zeal in behalf of religion and morals."

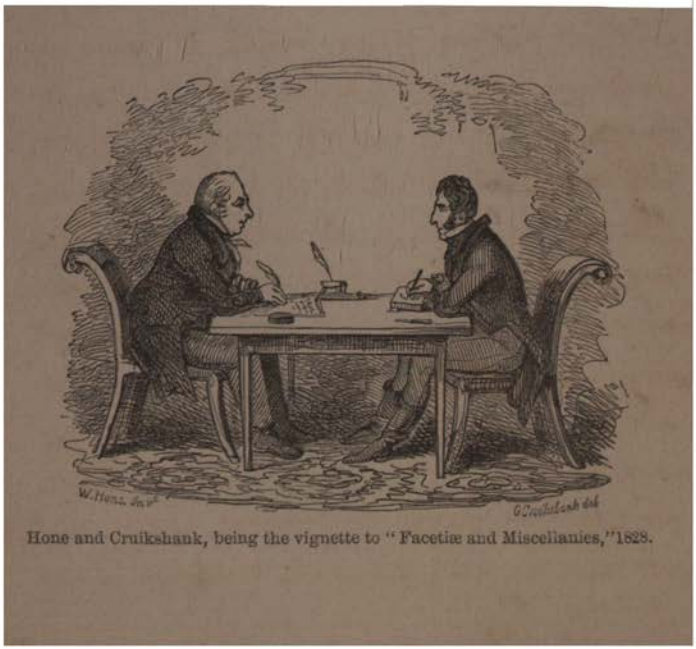
This manly vindication of his friend was characteristic of George Cruikshank. "When Hone was arraigned for blasphemy, Cruikshank," says a writer on him in the *London Review* (December 28th, 1867), who knew him, "was consulted, and he dictated a letter, begging the Attorney-General not to take proceedings. This letter, one of Hone's little children took to that Crown

officer's private house. But in vain. The action went on, and the ill-paid artist stood nobly by his friend. It is even said that the trial was rehearsed in Cruikshank's studio, and that he and Hone concocted the defence together."

When Hone died, Cruikshank insisted upon going to the funeral of his friend. Dickens used to describe a serio-comic scene with Mrs. Cruikshank at the time, who implored him to intercede, not only because she feared George might be indiscreet and get into trouble, but because she could not bear "those horrid Miss Hones." Hone, on his side, bore handsome testimony to the genius of the artist.

Hone's "Ancient Mysteries Described," fcap. 8vo, 1823, contains two illustrations by George Cruikshank; viz., "The Giants in Guildhall," and "Fools' Morris Dance." In an allusion to the giants, Mr. Hone observed: "In order to perpetuate their appearance they are drawn and etched by Mr. George Cruikshank, whose extraordinary talents have been happily exercised on my more original fancies. As this may be

the last time that I shall ever write Mr. Cruikshank's name for the press, I cannot but express my astonishment that a pencil which commands the admiration of any individual qualified to appreciate art, should be disregarded by that class whose omission to secure it in their service is a remarkable instance of disregard to their own interests as the midwives of literature."



Hone and Cruikshank, being the vignette to "Facetiæ and Miscellanies," 1828.

CHAPTER V.

"LIFE IN LONDON," "LIFE IN PARIS," "POINTS OF HUMOUR," ETC.

"AND yet it is no trifle to be a good caricaturist," exclaimed Professor Wilson, writing an article on Cruikshank, in *Blackwood*, in July 1823. "Forbid the thought, ye shades of Bunbury and Gillray! forbid it, even thou, if thou be still in the land of the living, good Dighton! forbid it, charming, laughter-moving Rowlandson! Bunbury was a great genius, and would have been a great caricaturist, had he been possessed of art at all in proportion to his imagination. But he could not draw—not he. As far as faces went, he was at home, and admirable; and even as to the figure, provided he was allowed the benefit of loose breeches and capacious coats, and grizzly wigs, and tobacco

smoke, he could get on well enough. But this is not the thing. The caricaturist should be *able* to represent everything; and then he can represent what he chooses in a very different style from that of a man whose ignorance, not his choice, limits the sphere of his representation. Rowlandson, again, is a considerable dab at drawing; but, somehow or other, his vein is *ultra*, his field is not comedy, but farce—buffoonery—and this will not do with the English temperament, except for merely temporary purposes. The Rev. Brownlow North (worthy of bearing that illustrious name, O Christopher!) is another capital caricaturist. . . . Gillray was in himself a host. He is the first name on the list of Political Caricaturists, strictly so called. George III. (honest man!), and Boney, and Fox, and Sheridan, and Pitt, and Windham, and Melville, and Grenville, are his peculiar property. His fame will repose for ever on their broad bottoms. Cruikshank may, if he pleases, be a second Gillray; but, once more, this should not be his ambition. He is fitted for a higher walk. Let him play Gillray, if he will, at leisure hours—let him even

pick up his pocket-money by Gillrayizing; but let him give his days and his nights to labour that Gillray's shoulders were not meant for, and rear (for he may) a reputation such as Gillray was too sensible a fellow to dream of aspiring after."

This article was provoked by the success of "Life in London," illustrated by the brothers Robert and George Cruikshank, followed by that revelation of George's genius, his "Points of Humour," and not by the scores of political caricatures he was throwing off for Humphrey, Fores, and others. He had not yet broken away from the uncongenial political ground to the social; but he had opened that vast gallery of London scenes which he had been accumulating during twenty years of hard toil in the metropolis. Wilson gives us a peep behind the curtain of Cruikshank's life at this time, as he had heard it described over a glass with Egan and other roystering friends. He even ventures to lecture his *protégé*:—

"It is high time that the public should think more than they have hitherto done of George Cruikshank;

and it is also high time that George Cruikshank should begin to think more than he seems to have done hitherto of himself. Generally speaking, people consider him as a clever, sharp caricaturist, and nothing more—a free-handed, comical young fellow, who will do anything he is paid for, and who is quite contented to dine off the proceeds of a 'George IV.' to-day, and those of a 'Hone' or a 'Cobbett' to-morrow. He himself, indeed, appears to be the most careless creature alive, as touching his reputation. He seems to have no plan—almost no ambition—and, I apprehend, not much industry. He does just what is suggested or thrown in his way, pockets the cash, orders his beef-steak and bowl, and chaunts, like one of his own heroes,—

'Life is all a variorum,
We regard not how it goes.'

Now, for a year or two, to begin with, this is just as it should be. Cruikshank was resolved to see *life;* and his sketches show that he has seen it, in some of its walks, to purpose. But life is short, and art is long; and our gay friend must pull up." Then the Professor remarks

that perhaps he is not aware of the fact himself, but a fact it undoubtedly is, that he possesses genius—genius in its truest sense—strong, original, English genius. "Look round the world of Art," says the Professor, "and ask, how many are there of whom anything like this can be said? Why, there are not half a dozen names that could bear being mentioned at all; and certainly there is not one, the pretensions of which will endure sifting more securely and more triumphantly than that of George Cruikshank."

He is venerated as "a total despiser of that venerable humbug" which was "the prime god of the idolatry" of his contemporaries. The lecturer proceeds:—

"I am of opinion that George Cruikshank is one of the many young gentlemen whose education (like that of the English opium-eater) has been neglected. But there is no time lost; he has, I hope, a long life and a merry one before him yet; and he may depend upon it, his life will be neither the shorter nor the duller for his making it something of a studious one. He should read—read—read. He should be indefatigable in

reading. He should rise at six in the morning. If he can't work till he has had something to settle his stomach (my own case), he can have a little coffee-pot placed on the hob over-night, and take a cup of that and a single crust of toast, and he will find himself quite able for anything. What a breakfast he will be able to devour about nine or half-past nine, after having enriched his mind with several hours of conversation with the greatest and the wisest of his species! He may rely upon it, this hint is worth taking. Then let him draw, etch, and paint, until about two o'clock p.m., then take a lounge through the streets, to see if anything is stirring—step into Westminster Hall, the fives court, the Rev. Edward Irving's chapel (if it be Sunday), or any other public place, jotting down à la Hogarth all the absurd faces he falls in with upon his finger-nails. A slight dinner and a single bottle will carry him on till it is time to go to the play, or the Castle Tavern, or the House of Commons, or the evening preaching, or the Surrey lecture, or the like. At first sight, it may appear that I am cutting short

the hours of professional exertion too much, but this I am convinced is mere humbug. Does the author of Waverley eat, or drink, or ride, or talk, or laugh, a whit the less because he writes an octavo every month? No such thing. Does Jeffrey plead his causes a bit the worse because he is the editor of the *Edinburgh Review?* Does Wordsworth write worse poems, for collecting the taxes of Cumberland; or Lamb, worse Elias, for being clerk to the India House? The artists are all of them too diligent—that is the very fault I want to cure them of. Their pallets are never off their thumbs—their sticks are eternally in their fingers."

He goes on to say that the advantage of a little proper reading may be illustrated by the history of George Cruikshank, "as well as by that of any other individual I have the pleasure of not being personally acquainted with." He commends Cruikshank's early caricatures as "in their several ways excellent things." "But," he exclaims, "what a start did he make when his genius had received a truer and diviner impulse from the splendid imagination of an Egan! How completely,

how *toto cœlo* did he out-Cruikshank himself, when he was called upon to embody the conceptions of that remarkable man in the designs of Tom and Jerry! The world felt this—and he himself felt it.

"Again, no disparagement to my friend Pierce Egan (who is one of the pleasantest as well as one of the greatest men now extant, and with whom, last time I was in town, I did not hesitate to crack a bottle of Belcher's best), Cruikshank made another, and a still more striking stride, when he stepped from Egan to Burns, and sought his inspiration from the very best of all Burns's glorious works, 'The Jolly Beggars.' It is of this work (the 'Points of Humour') that I am now to speak. It was for the purpose of puffing it and its author, and of calling upon all who have eyes to water and sides to ache to buy it, that I began this leading lecture. It is, without doubt, the first thing that has appeared since the death of Hogarth. Yes, Britain possesses once more an artist capable of seizing and immortalizing the traits of that which I consider as by far the most remarkable of our national characteristics

—the *Humour* of the People. *Ex pede* Herculem: the man who drew these things is fit for anything. Let him but do himself justice, and he must take his place *inter lumina Anglorum.*"

Of "Life in London," and "Life in Paris," which followed it, Thackeray, writing seventeen years after Wilson, utters the opinion which is likely to be the final one on the literary and artistic merits of these works :—

"A curious book, called 'Life in Paris,' published in 1822, contains a number of the artist's plates in the aquatint style; and though we believe he had never been in that capital, the designs have a great deal of life in them, and pass muster very well. A villainous race of shoulder-shrugging mortals are his Frenchmen indeed. And the heroes of the tale, a certain Mr. Dick Wildfire, Squire Jenkins, and Captain O'Shuffleton, are made to show the true British superiority on every occasion when Britons and French are brought together. This book was one among the many that the designer's genius has caused to be popular; the plates are not carefully executed, but, being coloured, have a pleasant,

lively look. The same style was adopted in the once famous book called 'Tom and Jerry, or Life in London,' which must have a word of notice here; for, although by no means Mr. Cruikshank's best work, his reputation was extraordinarily raised by it. Tom and Jerry were as popular twenty years since as Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller now are; and often have we wished, while reading the biographies of the latter celebrated personages, that they had been described as well by Mr. Cruikshank's pencil as by Mr. Dickens's pen.

'As for Tom and Jerry, to show the mutability of human affairs, and the evanescent nature of reputation, we have been to the British Museum and no less than five circulating libraries in quest of the book, and 'Life in London,' alas, is not to be found at any one of them. We can only, therefore, speak of the work from recollection, but have still a very clear remembrance of the leather gaiters of Jerry Hawthorn, the green spectacles of Logic, and the hooked nose of Corinthian Tom. They were the schoolboys' delight; and in the days when the work appeared, we firmly believed the three

heroes above named to be types of the most elegant, fashionable young fellows the town afforded, and thought their occupations and amusements were those of all high-bred English gentlemen. Tom knocking down the watchman at Temple Bar ; Tom and Jerry dancing at Almack's; or flirting in the saloon at the theatre ; at the night-houses, after the play; at Tom Cribb's, examining the silver cup then in the possession of that champion ; at Bob Logic's chambers, where, if we mistake not, 'Corinthian Kate' was at a cabinet piano, singing a song ; ambling gallantly in Rotten Row, or examining the poor fellow at Newgate who was having his chains knocked off before hanging ; all these scenes remain indelibly engraved upon the mind, and so far we are independent of all the circulating libraries in London.

"As to the literary contents of the book, they have passed sheer away. It was, most likely, not particularly refined; nay, the chances are that it was absolutely vulgar. But it must have had some merit of its own, that is clear ; it must have given striking descriptions

of life in some part or other of London, for all London read it, and went to see it in its dramatic shape. The artist, it is said, wished to close the career of the three heroes by bringing them all to ruin; but the writer, or publishers, would not allow any such melancholy subjects to clash the merriment of the public, and we believe Tom, Jerry, and Logic were married off at the end of the tale, as if they had been the most moral personages in the world. There is some goodness in this pity which author and the public are disposed to show towards certain agreeable, disreputable characters of romance. Who would mar the prospects of honest Roderick Random, or Charles Luface, or Tom Jones? Only a very stern moralist indeed. And in regard of Jerry Hawthorn and that hero without a surname, Corinthian Tom, Mr. Cruikshank, we make little doubt, was glad in his heart that he was not allowed to have his way."

According to Mr. Sala, only a few of the pictures in "Life in London" were the production of George Cruikshank. "We are not even quite certain," he says,

"as to whether the irresistibly ninth provoking group of 'Dusty Bob and Black Sal' can be claimed by him. Robert Cruikshank was the chief illustrator of Pierce Egan's questionable *magnum opus;* and, oddly enough, until attention was drawn to George's commanding talents by Professor Wilson and *Blackwood*, it was Robert or 'Bob' Cruikshank who was imagined, by a careless public, to be the genius of the family. His more gifted brother, nevertheless, was the sole illustrator in some forty admirable aquatint engravings of a kind of *pendant* to 'Life in London,' called 'Life Paris.' The letterpress of this production was not furnished by Pierce Egan; nor could George at the end of his life remember by whom it was written, although the man's name, he was wont to say, 'was always on the tip of his tongue.'"

George Cruikshank's sketches of the Boulevards and the Palais Royal, elaborated from sketches furnished to him, were wonderfully spirited and true; albeit he had never been across the Channel. Indeed, he never got beyond a French seaport in the course of his long life.

A day at Boulogne comprehended all his continental experiences. His contemporary, Bryan Waller Procter, had never seen the ocean when he wrote "The Sea"; again, neither Schiller nor Rossini had seen Switzerland when they wrote their "William Tell." Cuthbert Bede asserts that Cruikshank originated "Life in London," and "was greatly displeased and distressed at the way in which the author wrote up to his designs." In those days the Cruikshanks were not in a position to command Pierce Egan. It is clear that the designs illustrate the written work. It is quite true that George lamented the coarseness and the plan of it; but the plates have, throughout, his signature in conjunction with his brother's.

Mr. Percy R. Cruikshank, the son of Robert Isaac, had the following account of the origin of Tom and Jerry from his father: "The wonderfully successful Tom and Jerry, or Life in London, although ostensibly Pierce Egan's idea, was universally given to George Cruikshank, whereas the original notion and very designs were mostly Robert's. He conceived the notion,

and planned the designs, while showing a brother-in-law, just returned from China, some of the "life" which was going on in London at the time. He designed the characters of Tom, Jerry, and Logic from himself, brother-in-law, and Pierce Egan, keeping to the likenesses of each model. Robert offered the work to Messrs. Sherwood, Gilbert, and Piper, of Paternoster Row, who saw nothing in it, but at length accepted the offer, and by doing so realized a large sum of money, the etchings taking immensely. . . . George Cruikshank, shortly before his death, said to his nephew Percy, "When your father proposed Tom and Jerry to me, I suggested that it should be carried out in a series of oil paintings, after the manner of Hogarth, but he objected, considering etching was safer, and more rapidly convertible into ready money."*

* In the introduction to the 1869 edition of the work, Mr. John Camden Hotten supposes the following origin: "One day it occurred to the editor of *Boxiana* that if Londoners were so anxious for books about country and out-of-door sports, why should not provincials, and even cockneys themselves, be equally anxious to know something of 'Life in London'? The editor

To the Tom and Jerry plates Thackeray returned in a *Roundabout Paper* in the *Cornhill Magazine*, after a visit to the British Museum to renew his acquaintance with the lively pair, or Thomas and Jeremiah—his "witty way," he says, of calling them. He found the reading so-so—"even a little vulgar, well, well."

"But the pictures!" he exclaims. "Oh! the pictures are noble still!" That George Cruikshank did not withdraw his name or his etching-needle from the adventures of Tom and Jerry, at any time of their career of extraordinary success, is proved by one or two facts. When, after all the theatres had been filled with dramatic versions of Egan's "Life in London," and the author himself prepared an extravaganza on his

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of *Boxiana* was our Pierce Egan, who, as the literary representative of sport and high life, had already been introduced to George IV. The character of the proposed work was mentioned to the King, and His Gracious Majesty seems to have heartily approved of it, for he at once gave permission for it to be dedicated to himself. The services of Messrs. I. R. and George Cruikshank were secured as illustrators, and on the 15th of July, 1821, the first number, price one shilling, was published by Messrs. Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, of Paternoster Row."

book for Astley's in 1822, the songs and parodies introduced into it appeared "with a highly finished picture of the pony races, by George Cruikshank."

"It is not generally known," says Mr. Hotten, "that George Cruikshank painted a public-house sign to celebrate the success of *Dusty Bob* in 'Tom and Jerry.' Walbourn, the comedian, who personated this character with extraordinary success, kept the 'Maidenhead' public-house at Battle Bridge, and the artist painted a whole-length portrait of him in character, which was hung out as his signboard. Moncrieff (who dramatized 'Tom and Jerry') used to say that the three characters, Tom, Jerry, and Logic, stood for George Cruikshank, Robert Cruikshank, and Pierce Egan; that many of the adventures in the book were in part autobiographical, and that the portraits of the heroes in the pictures bore a striking resemblance to the portraits of the three artists in actual life." If the artist did not paint a public-house sign, like Hogarth, he carefully etched a large portrait of Mr. Walbourn as Dusty Bob, with his fantail under his arm, which was published in St.

James's Street; and prepared another copy of this same portrait, with a thin additional line round the print, inscribed above, "Messrs. Reid and Co.'s Entire," and below, "W. Walbourn, Wine and Spirit Merchant, Maidenhead, Battle Bridge." * Nor is this all; George was "in at the death," to use a phrase appropriate to Egan's work. On the 1st February, 1823, a broadside was issued "for Pierce Egan," from his "Tiny Crib," 71, Chancery Lane, price one shilling, bearing an affecting title, "The Tears of Pierce Egan for the Death of Life in London; or, The Funeral of Tom and Jerry. By T. Greenwood, Esq. Dedicated to I. R. and George Cruikshank." The broadside which represents the joy of the Charlies at Tom and Jerry being "floored" by death, and the funeral procession of Tom and Jerry, is marked "G. Cruikshank fecit." The

* In 1835, George Cruikshank etched "A Back and Front View of the Statue (formerly) at Battle Bridge, New Road." "The back resembles a sack of flour upon a post, and the front view suggests the idea of 'Dusty Bob in a Blanket.' 'Lumber-Troopers,' two very stout men, seated at a table, smoking and drinking; other designs around."

frontispiece to Greenwood's burlesque is a grotesque picture of this funeral.*

Dusty Bob was always a favourite character with George. The two brothers, who enjoyed their frolics together very much in their early days, having resolved to go to a masquerade at Covent Garden, Robert, who was fond of dress, selected a gorgeous cavalier costume, while George resolved to appear as a dustman. The dustman of those days, in his Sunday clothes, was a picturesque object, with his well-blacked fan-tailed hat, white flannel jacket, scarlet plush breeches, white stockings, and neat gaiters. He had a liberal display of linen, and about his neck a bright-tinted "Barcelona" kerchief. But George Cruikshank resolved

* "Two rows of figures form the procession, which is led by two crossing-sweepers, who clear the way; then boys with links, mutes, jockeys, flower and match girls; Logic, with his broken umbrella up; Kate and Sue, servants, pugilists, and a man bearing the ropes of the prize-ring; Dusty Bob and Sal. Billy Waters, Little Jemmy in his sledge, fish-women, men with banners, 'Charlies' bringing up the rear, dancing and shouting."—*Mr. G. W. Reid's Descriptive Catalogue of the Works of George Cruikshank.*

to go as the workaday dustman, as he had studied him in his low haunts. He obtained a dustman's old patched suit, begrimed his face and hands artistically, put a dirty clay pipe in his mouth, and strolled on a summer's evening from Dorset Street to Covent Garden Theatre, where, with all a dustman's roughness, he presented his ticket. The collector hesitated, amazed that so low a fellow could have obtained possession of the ticket.

"Haint it reg'lar?" shouted the dustman.

The difficulty was cleared up by the appearance of the splendid cavalier Robert, who took the dustman's arm into the theatre, where he executed the "double shuffle," to the great diversion of the dissipated company.

That the adventures of Tom and Jerry and Logic were in some degree the experiences of Egan and the brothers Cruikshank can hardly be doubted.* It is

* G. Cruikshank had worked for Egan in 1814. He had etched for him The Entrance of Louis XVIII. into Paris, as a frontispiece to a Map-book, which was published by Egan, at his establishment in Great Marlborough Street, in this year.

quite clear that the artists "went the rounds" of dissipation, if only to make up their pictures. Egan was at home in the scenes which he described; nor, as we have seen, were the young Cruikshanks, in those days, puritanical in their ways of life. George, we find, was reputed to be so wild, that Professor Wilson, who admired his genius, admonished him to bring himself down to a bottle at dinner, and to moderate his amusements.

If we take "Life in London" in conjunction with the daily hand-to-mouth work which George Cruikshank had been executing for the popular publishers of caricatures, and particularly from the day when Mrs. Humphreys invited him into her shop to take up the etching-needle of her helpless invalid upstairs, we shall see that, although the young artist had what would now be called strong moral proclivities and quick sympathies, he was ready to conform to the spirit of the times, to hit hard, and to make bold steps on very delicate ground.

The miscellaneous work which Cruikshank threw off,

in the midst of the labours of a higher class, and more congenial to his genius, between 1820 and 1830, was prodigious. He was, indeed, the pictorial chronicler and satirist and moralist of the time. Before entering upon this part of his labours, let us glance at the best collection of them to which he gave a distinctive form. His "Points of Humour" are among the best expressions of his observation and skill, in his vivacious mood. They delighted his good friend and generous admirer, Thackeray. The mood, the manner of the outlook upon passing events, often suggest Thackeray himself. Cruikshank's flunkeys were the progenitors of Jeames and Tummus of Thackeray and Leech, as his beadles were the forefathers of Bumble.

"Mr. Cruikshank's next important public appearance," says Mr. Thackeray, "was with his 'Points of Humour'* (1822 and 1824), after 'Life in London

* In a note to his essay on George Cruikshank in *Blackwood*, Professor Wilson says:—"The 'Points of Humour' are to appear in occasional numbers. No. I. contains about a dozen etchings, and fifty pages of very well written letterpress. The

and Paris'—some twenty copper-plates selected from various works." "The collector of humorous designs," Mr. Thackeray remarks, "cannot fail to have them in his portfolio, for they contain some of the very best efforts of Mr. Cruikshank's genius; and though not quite so highly laboured as some of his later productions, are none the worse, in our opinion, for their comparative want of finish. All the effects are perfectly given, and the expression as good as it could be in the most delicate engraving upon steel. The artist's style, too, was then completely formed; and, for our part, we should say that we preferred his manner of 1825 to any which he has adopted since. The first picture, which is called 'The Point of Honour,' illustrates the old story of the officer who, on being accused of cowardice for refusing to fight a duel, came among his brother officers, and flung a lighted grenade down

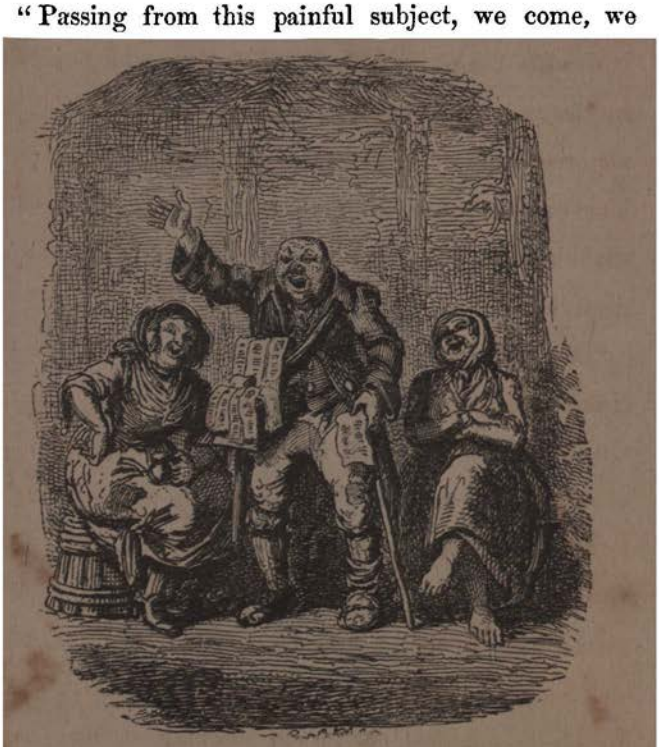
work is published by C. Baldwyn, Newgate Street, London, and the price per number is only eight shillings, which is dog-cheap, as things go."

upon the floor, before which his comrades fled ignominiously. This design is capital, and the outward rush of heroes, walking, trampling, twisting, scuffling at the door, is in the best style of the grotesque. You see but the back of most of these gentlemen, into which, nevertheless, the artist has managed to throw an expression of ludicrous agony that one could scarcely have expected to find in such a part of the human figure. The next plate is not less good. It represents a couple who, having been found one night tipsy, and lying in the same gutter, were, by a charitable though misguided gentleman, supposed to be man and wife, and put comfortably to bed together. The morning came: fancy the surprise of this interesting pair when they awoke and discovered their situation. Fancy the manner, too, in which Cruikshank has depicted them, to which words cannot do justice. It is needless to state that this fortuitous and temporary union was followed by one more lasting and sentimental, and that these two worthy persons were married, and lived happily ever after.

"We should like to go through every one of these prints. There is the jolly miller, who, returning home at night, calls upon his wife to get him a supper, and falls to upon rashers of bacon and ale. How he gormandises, that jolly miller! rasher after rasher,—how they pass away frizzling and smoking from the gridiron down that immense grinning gulf of a mouth. Poor wife! how she pines and frets at that untimely hour of midnight to be obliged to fry, fry, fry perpetually, and minister to the monster's appetite. And yonder in the clock, what agonised face is that we see? By heavens, it is the squire of the parish! What business has he there? Let us not ask. Suffice it to say, that he has, in the hurry of the moment, left upstairs his br——; his—psha! a part of his dress, in short, with a number of bank-notes in the pockets. Look in the next page, and you will see the ferocious, bacon-devouring ruffian of a miller is actually causing this garment to be carried through the village, and cried by the town-crier. And we blush to be obliged to say that the demoralised miller never offered to return the bank-notes, although he was

so mighty scrupulous in endeavouring to find an owner for the corduroy portfolio in which he had found them.

"Passing from this painful subject, we come, we



The Jolly Beggars.

regret to state, to a series representing personages not a whit more moral. Burns's famous 'Jolly Beggars' have all had their portraits drawn by Cruikshank."

George Cruikshank's "Phrenological Illustrations" (1826), "Illustrations of Time" (1827), and "Scraps and Sketches" (1828), in which the celebrated scene "What is Taxes, Thomas?" will be found all published by the artist himself, may be said to have furnished the pictorial material for the first attempt at illustrated journalism. Mr. J. C. Rogers, a friend of Cruikshank's, describes the transaction as he had it from the wronged artist.*

"The 'Gallery of Comicalities,' originated in the circumstance that some forty years ago he (George Cruikshank) was applied to by Mr. Dowling, the editor of *Bell's Life in London*—with whom he had been on terms of intimacy—for leave to reproduce some half-dozen of the etchings from his works called 'Phrenological Illustrations,' 'Illustrations of Time,' and 'Scraps and Sketches,' in the pages of the journal named. Acting on the qualified permission so obtained, Mr. Claremont, the proprietor, to the utter astonishment of the

* *Notes and Queries*, 4th series, vol. v., p. 301.

artist, appropriated for his newspaper the whole, or nearly all, of George Cruikshank's designs, contained in the works in question. When remonstrated with by the artist, and required to stay the issue of the number of the paper in which these appeared, on the ground that it was seriously interfering with the sale of the artist's own works, Mr. Claremont, through his editor, peremptorily declined. Consulting a professional friend holding a post in the Court of Chancery, to know whether an injunction might not be obtained to restrain Mr. Claremont in the course he had thought proper to follow, the artist was advised to suffer the wrong rather than enter into litigation, the result of which in any court would entail pecuniary loss.

"These illustrations, I have said, first appeared in the columns of *Bell's Life in London*, under the heading, 'Gallery of Comicalities.' They were afterwards published separately by Mr. Claremont. A very large number were sold, and large profits realized. George Cruikshank neither received nor would have accepted a single farthing. . . . George Cruikshank never contributed

directly to the 'Gallery of Comicalities,' His designs, obtained in the manner described, were copied by an ordinary wood engraver from his etchings. The average cost of these, he informed me, would not exceed thirty shillings each. Mr. Claremont, finding the thing a profitable venture, continued the publication, and employed Kenny Meadows and others to furnish new designs." It is asserted that if there were any designs by his brother Isaac Robert, they were no doubt appropriated in the same immoral manner.

"The Gallery of Comicalities" was a great success. Mr. William Bates, of Birmingham, says of it, in *Notes and Queries*, "I am happily able to count myself among those collectors who possess these witty sheets—the delight of my boyhood—in a perfect state." The eight series into which the gallery is divided, introduces us for the first time to Kenny Meadows and John Leech, as well as to rich stolen fruit from Cruikshank's highly productive orchard; and, according to Mr. Bates, to plentiful gleaning from the works of Isaac Robert Cruikshank. Here Meadows' sketches from Lavater appeared,

including "The Phisogs of the Traders of London," and giving a foretaste of his "Heads of the People;" and in the gallery are some of poor Seymour's sketches of the "Sporting Cockney," and drawings by Chatfield,—an artist now forgotten, but a light in the early times of Douglas Jerrold, Dickens, Thackeray, Meadows,—and Leech's early drawings; and the great variety of subjects treated with a vigorous, fresh, racy humour by them and others, are a foretaste of *Punch* that was to start in a few years. The popular appetite for caricature, and for humorous and sarcastic commentaries on the subjects of the day, was diffused among the people by Cleave's coarser and cheaper pictorial gallery.

The taste for pictorial journalism was distinctly the creation of our caricaturists. Founded by James Gillray and his humbler contemporaries, it was developed by the genius of Rowlandson and George Cruikshank, and so popularised by the latter, that his drawings were, as we have seen, actually carried into the columns of a newspaper. Even this paper he may be said to have indirectly created. *Bell's Life in London* originally

appeared in 1824, as *Pierce Egan's Life in London, and Sporting Gazette.* Egan was, when Tom and Jerry took the town by storm, the sporting contributor to the *Weekly Dispatch;* and the success of this work so roused the jealousy of the *Dispatch* conductors, that they gave Egan his *congé.* His dismissal, and the popularity he enjoyed at the moment, emboldened him to start a paper on his own account. It flourished awhile, and in 1827 Mr. Egan sold it to a Mr. Bell, who placed his name upon the title-page, where Egan's had stood. So that the journal which Mr. Cruikshank was indirectly instrumental in creating, rewarded him by unceremoniously transferring his drawings to its columns, and thus inaugurating the pictorial journalism of England.

The Phrenological Illustrations which Mr. Bell treated so unceremoniously had enjoyed more than a year's extraordinary popularity, and had even been a topic in Christopher North's "Noctes." *

"*Tickler.* James, a few minutes ago you mentioned the

* November 1826.

name of that prince of caricaturists, George Cruikshank; pray, have you seen his Phrenological Illustrations?

"*Shepherd.* That I hae,—he sent me the present as' copy to Mount Benger; and I thocht me and the haill hoose wud hae faln distracted wi' lauchin. O sirs, what a plate is yon Pheeloprogeniteeveness! It's no possible to make out the preceese amount o' the family, but there wad seem to be somewhere about a dizzen and a half—the legitimate produce o' the Eerish couple's ain fruitfu' lines. A' noses alike in their langness, wi' sleight vareeities, dear to ilka pawrent's heart! Then what kissing, and hugging, and rugging, and ridin on backs and legs, and rockin o' craddles, and speelin o' chairs, and washing o' claes, and boilin o' pirtawties! And ae wee bit spare rib o' flesh twurlin afore the fire, to be sent roun' lick and lick about, to gie to the tongues of the contented crew a meat flavour, alang wi' the wershness o' vegetable maitter! Sma' wooden sodgers gaun through the manuel exercise on the floor—ae nine-pin stannin by himself amang prostrate comrades—a boat shaped wi' a knife, by him that's gaun to be a sailor,

and on the wa', emblematical o' human Pheeloprogenitiveness (O bit that's a kittle word!) a hen and chickens, ane o' them perched atween her shouthers, and a countless cleckin aneath her outspread wings! What an observer o' nature that chiel is! Only look at the back of the faither's neck, and you'll no wonner at his family, for is't no like the back o' the neck o' a great bill?"

Tickler declares that LANGUAGE is almost as good, and North himself says: "Not a whit inferior VENERATION." Then Tickler observes: "George Cruikshank's various and admirable works should be in the possession of all lovers of the Arts. He is far more than the Prince of Caricaturists,—a man who regards the ongoings of life with the eye of genius; and he has a clear insight through the exterior of manners into the passions of the heart. He has wit as well as humour—feeling as well as fancy—and his original vein appears to be inexhaustible. Here's his health in a bumper."

The Cruikshank of twenty years later would have been inexpressibly shocked at the manner in which the Shepherd responded:

"George Cruikshank! But stop awee, my tumbler's dune. Here's to him in a caulker, and there's no mony folk whose health I wad drink, during toddy, in pure speerit."

Thackeray bears witness to the popularity of the Phrenological Sketches as quaintly as Christopher North :—

"He is the friend of the young especially. Have we not read all the story-books that his wonderful pencil has illustrated? Did we not forego tarts, in order to buy his 'Breaking-up,' or his 'Fashionable Monstrosities' of the year eighteen hundred and something? Have we not before us, at this very moment, a print—one of the admirable 'Illustrations of Phrenology'—which entire work was purchased by a joint-stock company of boys, each drawing lots afterwards for the separate prints, and taking his choice in rotation? The writer of this, too, had the honour of drawing the first lot, and seized immediately upon 'Philoprogenitiveness—a marvellous print (our copy is not at all improved by being coloured, which operation we performed on it

ourselves)—a marvellous print, indeed, full of ingenuity and fine jovial humour. A father, possessor of an enormous nose and family, is surrounded by the latter, who are, some of them, embracing the former. The composition writhes and twists about like the Kermes of Rubens. No less than seven little men and women in nightcaps, in frocks, in bibs, in breeches, are clambering about the head, knees, and arms of the man with the nose; their noses, too, are preternaturally developed—the twins in the cradle have noses of the most considerable kind; the second daughter, who is watching them; the youngest but two, who sits squalling in a certain wicker chair; the eldest son, who is yawning; the eldest daughter, who is preparing with the gravy of two mutton chops a savoury dish of Yorkshire pudding for eighteen persons; the youths who are examining her operations (one a literary gentleman, in a remarkably neat nightcap and pinafore, who has just had his finger in the pudding); the genius who is at work on the slate, and the two honest lads who are hugging the good-humoured washerwoman, their

mother,—all, all, save this worthy woman, have noses of the largest size. Not handsome, certainly, are they, and yet everybody must be charmed with the picture. It is full of grotesque beauty. The artist has at the back of his own skull, we are certain, a large bump of philoprogenitiveness. He loves children in his heart: every one of those he has drawn is perfectly happy, and jovial, and affectionate, and as innocent as possible. He makes them with large noses, but he loves them; and you always find something kind in the midst of his humour, and the ugliness redeemed by a sly touch of beauty."

Pursuing this current of genial criticism, Thackeray has pointed out that in Cruikshank's "Sketch Book" the observer may gather a good deal of information regarding the character of the individual man. "What strikes his eye as a painter; what moves his anger or admiration as a moralist; what classes he seems most especially disposed to observe, and what to ridicule. There are quacks of all kinds, to whom he has a mortal hatred; quack dandies, who assume under his pencil,

perhaps in his eye, the most grotesque appearance possible—their hats grow larger, their legs infinitely more crooked and lean; the tassels of their canes swell out to a most preposterous size; the tails of their coats dwindle away, and finish where coat-tails generally begin. Let us lay a wager that Cruikshank, a man of the people, if ever there was one, heartily hates and despises these supercilious, swaggering, young gentlemen; and his contempt is not a whit the less laudable because there may be *tout soit peu* of prejudice in it. It is right and wholesome to scorn dandies, as Nelson says it was to hate Frenchmen; in which sentiment (as we have before said) George Cruikshank undoubtedly shares. . . .

"Against dandy footmen he is particularly severe. He hates idlers, pretenders, boasters, and punishes these fellows as best he may. Who does not recollect the famous picture, 'What *is* Taxes, Thomas?' What is taxes, indeed! Well may that vast, over-fed, lounging flunkey ask the question of his associate Thomas, and yet not well, for all that Thomas says in reply is, *I don't*

know. *O beati plushicolæ,* what a charming state of ignorance is yours! In the Sketch Book many footmen make their appearance: one is a huge, fat Hercules of a Portman Square porter, who calmly surveys another poor fellow,—a porter likewise, but out of livery,—who comes staggering forward with a box that Hercules might lift with his little finger. Will Hercules do so? Not he. The giant can carry nothing heavier than a cocked-hat note on a silver tray, and his labours are to walk from his sentry-box to the door, and from the door back to his sentry-box, and to read the Sunday paper, and to poke the hall fire twice or thrice, and to make five meals a day. Such a fellow does Cruikshank hate and scorn worse even than a Frenchman.

"The man's master, too, comes in for no small share of our artist's wrath. See, here is a company of them at church, who humbly designate themselves 'MISERABLE SINNERS.' Miserable sinners, indeed! O what floods of turtle-soup, what tons of turbot and lobster-sauce, must have been sacrificed to make those sinners properly miserable! My lady there, with the ermine

tippet and draggling feathers, can we not see that she lives in Portland Place, and is the wife of an East India Director? She has been to the opera over-night (indeed, her husband, on her right, with his fat hand dangling over the pew-door, is at this minute thinking of Mademoiselle Léscadie, whom he saw behind the scenes) —she has been to the opera over-night, which with a trifle of supper afterwards—a white and brown soup, a lobster salad, some woodcocks, and a little champagne —sent her to bed quite comfortable. At half-past eight her maid brings her chocolate to bed, at ten she has fresh eggs and muffins, with, perhaps, a half-hundred of prawns for breakfast, and so can get over the day and the sermon till lunch-time pretty well. What an odour of musk and bergamot exhales from the pew! how it is wadded, and stuffed, and spangled over with brass nails! what hassocks are there for those who are not too fat to kneel! what a flustering and flapping of gilt prayer-books! and what a pious whirring of Bible-leaves one hears all over the church, as the doctor blandly gives out the text! To be miserable at this rate, you

must, at the very least, have four thousand a year; and many persons are there so enamoured of grief and sin, that they would willingly take the risk of the misery to have a life-interest in the Consols that accompany it, quite careless about consequences, and sceptical as to the notion that a day is at hand when you must fulfil *your share of the bargain.*

"Our artist loves to joke at a soldier, in whose livery there appears to him to be something almost as ridiculous as in the uniform of the gentleman of the shoulder-knot. Tall life-guardsmen and fierce grenadiers figure in many of his designs, and almost always in a ridiculous way. Here, again, we have the honest, popular English feeling which jeers at pomp or pretension of all kinds, and is especially jealous of all display of military authority. 'Raw recruit,' 'ditto dressed,' ditto 'served up,' as we see them in the Sketch Book, are so many satires upon the army. Hodge with his ribbons flaunting in his hat, or with red coat and musket, drilled stiff and pompous, or that last, minus leg and arm, tottering about on crutches,

do not fill our English artist with the enthusiasm that follows the soldier in every other part of Europe. Jeanjean, the conscript in France, is laughed at, to be sure, but then it is because he is a bad soldier; when he comes to have a huge pair of moustachios and the *croix d'honneur* to *briller* on his *poitrine cicatrisé*, Jeanjean becomes a member of a class that is more respected than any other in the French nation. The veteran soldier inspires our people with no such awe: we hold that democratic weapon the fist in much more honour than the sabre and bayonet, and laugh at a man tricked out in scarlet and pipeclay."

"In the supernatural," says Thackeray, "we find Cruikshank reigning supreme. He has invented in his time a little comic pandemonium, peopled with the most droll, good-natured fiends possible. We have before us Chamisso's 'Peter Schlemil' (1824), with Cruikshank's designs translated into German, and gaining nothing by the change. . . . He has also made designs for Victor Hugo's 'Hans of Iceland.' Strange, wild etchings were those, on a strange, mad subject; not so

good, in our notion, as the designs for the German books, the peculiar humour of which latter seemed to suit the artist exactly. There is a mixture of the awful and ridiculous in these, which perpetually excites and keeps awake the reader's attention; the German writer and the English artist seem to have an entire faith in their subject. The reader, no doubt, remembers the awful passage in 'Peter Schleusihl,' when the little gentleman purchases the shadow of that hero: 'Have the kindness, noble sir, to examine and try this bag.' He put his hand into his pocket, and drew thence a tolerably large bag of Cordovan leather, to which a couple of thongs were fixed. I took it from him, and immediately counted out ten gold pieces, and ten more, and ten more, and still other ten, whereupon I held out my hand to him. 'Done,' said I, 'it is a bargain; you shall have my shadow for your bag.' The bargain was concluded; he knelt down before me, and I saw him with a wonderful neatness take my shadow from head to foot, lightly lift it up from the grass, roll and fold it up neatly, and at last pocket it. He then rose up,

bowed to me once more, and walked away again, disappearing behind the rose-bushes. I don't know, but I thought I heard him laughing a little. I, however, kept fast hold of the bag. Everything around me was bright in the sun, and as yet I gave no thought to what I had done.' This marvellous event, narrated by Peter with such a faithful, circumstantial detail, is painted by Cruikshank in the most wonderful poetic way, with that happy mixture of the real and supernatural that makes the narrative so curious, and like truth."

The artist, in short, in a wonderfully complete way, embodies the author's feeling, as well as his idea. He plays, as it were, with the supernatural. Professor Wilson goes even farther. "Nobody, that has the least of an eye for art, can doubt that Cruikshank, if he chose, might design as many ANNUNCIATIONS, BEATIFICATIONS, APOTHEOSES, METAMORPHOSES, and so forth, as would cover York Cathedral from end to end. It is still more impossible to doubt that he might be a famous portrait painter. Now, these are fine lines both of them, and yet it is precisely the chief merit of

Cruikshank that he cuts them both, that he will have nothing to do with them, that he has chosen a walk of his own, and that he has made his own walk popular. Here lies genius; but let him do himself justice, let him persevere and *rise* in his own path, and *then*, ladies and gentlemen, *then* the day will come when his name will be a name indeed, not a name puffed and paraded in the newspapers, but a living, a substantial, perhaps even an illustrious, English name. Let him, in one word, proceed, and, as he proceeds, let him think of HOGARTH."

Under such encouragement as this, Cruikshank braced himself for work worthy of his genius, even in the hurly-burly of the daily life he led in London, and with the incessant demands upon him still, as the pictorial moralist and satirist of his time,—demands which he answered richly out of the inexhaustible fund of his fancy and humour,—as we shall see.

Diamond cut Diamond.—From "More Mornings at Bow Street."

CHAPTER VI.

HAND-TO-MOUTH WORK.

Shepherd. "What a subject for a picture by Geordie Cruikshanks—Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!"

Noctes Ambrosianæ, Nov. 1828.

EXACTLY. What a picture for the inimitable George! Humphreys in St. James's Street, Fores in Piccadilly, Fairburn of Broadway, Ludgate Hill, Hodgson and Co. of Newgate Street, W. Hone of Fleet Street, S. Knight of Sweeting's Alley, J. Dolby of the Strand, poor old Limbird of the same thoroughfare, and many others, all joined in the chorus. "What a subject for a picture by Geordie Cruikshanks"—let the new subject of the moment be what it might—a scene in the condemned cell, characters for Twelfth Night, a frontispiece to a song, His Most Gracious Majesty George the

Fourth returning from Westminster Hall in his Coronation Robes, or the Mermaid now exhibiting at the Turf Coffee House in St. James's Street, or Liston, or the elder Watkins in a new character, or Grimaldi in motley, pattering his last song! I have glanced at the more important work produced by George Cruikshank between 1820 and 1830; and the reader has seen what kind of effect it made in its time, and how it has been judged by critics of high authority. But the full strength of the artist can be estimated only after an examination of the sum of minor work which he got through at the same time. When his "Life in London" and Paris, "Phrenological Illustrations," "Humourist," "Points of Humour," and many series of book illustrations—comprehending a notable quantity of his best creations—are estimated, in conjunction with his hand-to-mouth work for the caricature shops, and the whole has been surveyed at once, the connoisseur stands literally amazed at the immeasurable fecundity of the artist. Within the range of this decade of feverish activity is amassed such wealth of fancy, of invention, of jocund

spirit, of sympathy for suffering, of rage over wrong, of minute observation of men and things, and withal such conscientious, ever-improving execution with pencil and needle, and lithographic ink and tinting-brush, upon wood and stone, and steel and copper, as not all the caricaturists or comic artists who have swarmed in Fleet Street since the Queen's coronation day could equal, if they made a joint show of their best. Cruikshank was lavish with his fancy, and his humour lives upon the smallest subject. He never made one poor little idea stand alone, as the practice is in the comic or satirical cartoons of the present day. It was his wont to support his dominant conception with a score of helpful accessories. He laid every detail under contribution towards the elucidation of the story to be told. His caricatures, as well as his serious pictures, abound in admirable by-play. His power of concentrating interest is unmatched. His chairs and tables speak. There is life in every accessory. *Nature morte* did not exist for him. "Dead as a door-nail" he could not understand; for under the magnetism of his etching-needle the nail

would laugh and speak. He was so full of life himself—a hornpipe dancer in his eighty-fourth year*—that, in spite of him, he infused it into anything he touched. No artist ever threw such movement and infused such vital breath into his pictures, as this untaught man of genius spontaneously breathed into his etchings and woodcuts. A scrimmage by him inclines the beholder to lift his arm to protect himself. When he leads off a dance upon copper, you involuntarily hum a jig. When his characters are merry, you laugh outright with them.

On the other hand, is his mood solemn, he can make your heart beat quick, and send you shuddering away, with his images in your brain—presences you will find it hard to banish. "The awful Jew that Cruikshank drew" lingered for years in Thackeray's mind; and the profound impression which it made on the public, when it appeared, has not faded even now.

* Meeting Mr. R. H. Horne some two years before his death, he danced the hornpipe before him, to show how sound and strong and active he still was.

More searching observation than that of Cruikshank in his prime was never possessed by an artist. His range did not stretch beyond the suburbs of London except perhaps to Margate in the hoy, but all that came within it he made his own. Out of the suburban landscapes he conjured fairy scenes; and Highgate and Hampstead supplied him with distant horizons which his imagination widened at his will. Thackeray declared that Cruikshank had a fine eye for homely landscapes, and yet his trees are as bad as his horses. "Old villages, farm-yards, groups of stacks, queer chimneys, churches, gable-end cottages, Elizabethan mansion-houses, and other old English scenes, he depicts with evident enthusiasm." His scenes to Brough's "Life of Falstaff" are exquisitely drawn. Where Falstaff is arrested at the suit of Mrs. Quickly, and again when he persuades her to lend him more money, the old houses are fine picturesque studies.

But London, and London streets and suburbs, constituted Cruikshank's world in his heyday; and he caught all the phases of this his universe, save and except its

upper classes. He lived in the midst of the people ; he was of them. His humble fortunes cast his lot, in his early time, among the poorer classes of professional men. He was passionately fond of the stage, and was familiar with the popular comedians of the minor theatres, and the landlords of the houses which they and he frequented. He lived at Islington, and belonged to a club called "The Crib," which had a room at the Sir Hugh Middleton public-house, of which Joseph Grimaldi,* the clown, was president. Mr. C. L. Gruneisen, who made Cruikshank's acquaintance at "The Crib," related how on one occasion, when a member bantered George rather

* Cruikshank illustrated songs Grimaldi sang ; for instance, "All the World's in Paris. Sung with great applause by Mr. Grimaldi, in the popular pantomime of Harlequin Whittington." Published Feb. 1st, 1815..

In 1824 he drew "the celebrated actor astride of a common washing-stool, metamorphosed, with the aid of the copper-stick, a broom, and an animal's skull, into his "Neddy," while singing his favourite song of the season—"Here we go, me and my neddy, gee woo!"

In 1825 he drew another portrait of Grimaldi in the pantomime of Harlequin Whittington.

savagely, and he—contrary to his custom—had borne the "chaff" without replying, he presently turned to him, and holding up his hand, showed a caricature of his assailant executed upon his thumb-nail, and said, "Look here! See how I have booked him!"

It was in this and kindred scenes with which Cruikshank was familiar in his prime, and out of the excesses which, as we have seen, Professor Wilson—himself no fastidious liver—tried to tempt him by promises of a higher and wider fame, that Cruikshank drew the matchless gallery of contemporary life, in which the humours, passions, whims, and absurdities of our fathers and grandfathers are snatched from oblivion, and left to inform and brighten the page of the future historian.

"We can submit to public notice," says Mr. Thackeray, "a complete little gallery of dustmen. Here is, in the first place, the professional dustman, who, having in the enthusiastic exercise of his delightful trade, laid hands upon property not strictly his own, is pursued, as we presume, by the right owner, from whom he flies

as fast as his crooked shanks will carry him. What a curious picture it is—the horrid rickety houses in some dingy suburb of London, the grinning cobbler, the smothered butcher, the very trees which are covered with dust—it is fine to look at the different expressions of the two interesting fugitives. The fiery charioteer who belabours yonder poor donkey has still a glance for his brother on foot, on whom punishment is about to descend. And not a little curious is it to think of the creative power of the man who has arranged this little tale of low life. How logically it is conducted! how cleverly each one of the accessories is made to contribute to the effect of the whole! What a deal of thought and humour has the artist expended on this little block of wood! a large picture might have been painted out of the very same materials which Mr. Cruikshank, out of his wondrous fund of merriment and observation, can afford to throw away upon a drawing not two inches long. From the practical dustmen we pass to those purely poetical. Here are three of them, who rise on clouds of their own raising, the very genius

of the sack and shovel. Is there no one to write a sonnet to these? and yet a whole poem was written about Peter Bell the waggoner, a character by no means so poetic.* And, lastly, we have the dustman in love. The honest fellow is on the spectator's right hand; and having seen a young beauty stepping out of a gin-shop on a Sunday morning, is pressing eagerly his suit. His arms round the 'young beauty's' neck, her face is hidden behind the dustman's fantail hat."

That society of dustmen, which Cruikshank used to observe, when he lived in Dorset Street, Salisbury Square, sank deep into his mind. In the Triumph of Cupid, many years later, we shall still find the dustman. He is lying in the foreground, "compelled to bite the dust"—while the artist smokes his long pipe, and Cupid, astride his slippers, toasts a heart at the fire. That long pipe (only it was honest clay, and not the magnificent meerschaum to which George has treated himself in his vision) was his companion for many a year. "Yes, I remember Mr. Cruikshank very well when I was a little

* Mr. Thackeray overlooked "The Literary Dustman."

girl," writes an old friend of his. "When he came, a long clay pipe was sent for. He would sit smoking it after dinner, and we were greatly amused by the energetic gesticulation with which he accompanied his conversation." His was a handsome face, with steely blue eyes that struck through you. They flashed as brightly as the eyes of Mr. Dickens, but they had no merriment—only keenness, and a certain fierceness in them. Those eyes penetrated all the mysteries of London life, and peered through clouds of tobacco-smoke, and over foaming tankards in all kinds of strange and queer places.

"For Jews, sailors, Irishmen, Hessian boots, little boys, beadles, policemen, tall life-guardsmen, charity children, pumps, dustmen, very short pantaloons, dandies in spectacles, and ladies with aquiline noses, remarkably taper waists, and wonderfully long ringlets," says Thackeray, "Mr. Cruikshank has a special predilection. The tribe of Israelites he has studied with amazing gusto; witness the Jew in Mr. Ainsworth's 'Jack Shepherd,' and the immortal Fagin of 'Oliver Twist.' Whereabouts lies the comic *vis* in these persons

and things? Why should a beadle be comic, and his opposite a charity boy? Why should a tall life-guardsman have something in him essentially absurd? Why are short breeches more ridiculous than long? What is there particularly jocose about a pump? and wherefore does a long nose always provoke the beholder to laughter? These points may be metaphysically elucidated by those who list. It is probable that Mr. Cruikshank could not give an accurate definition of that which is ridiculous in these objects, but his instinct has told him that fun lurks in them, and cold must be the heart that can pass by the pantaloons of his charity boys, the Hessian boots of his dandies, and the fantail hats of his dustmen, without respectful wonder."

George Cruikshank also created the ladies of the Sairy Gamp order. We find one in a set of his Lottery Puffs, published in January 1818—a midwife with a prodigious bonnet. And does she not appear as Mrs. Toddles, the ancestress of Mrs. Brown of our day, in the *Omnibus?* The debt of the humourists and public caricaturists who have lived and flourished (aye, flou-

rished as poor George never did) on the crumbs of his Rabalaisian banquet of humour, is immeasurable. Many of the comic London characters of to-day are only his figures redressed. They are seen through the spectacles which he invented. Only, the fine fancy, the rollicking gaiety, the cumulation of fun in some four inches square of box-wood, are thinly spread over square feet. Think of Cruikshank's Irishmen! Thackeray says of them,—

"We have said that our artist has a great love for the drolleries of the Queen Island. . . . We know not if Mr. Cruikshank has ever had any such good luck as to see the Irish in Ireland itself, but he certainly has obtained a knowledge of their looks, as if the country had been all his life familiar to him. Could Mr. O'Connell himself desire anything more national than the following scene? or would Father Mathew have a better text to preach upon? There is not a broken nose in the room that is not thoroughly Irish."

The observer of all the humours of London life, the member of Mr. Joseph Grimaldi's club at the Sir

LIBRARY OF THE HUMANITIES OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY

The Giant Bolster striding from the Beacon to Carn Brea —
— A distance of Six Miles —

Hugh Middleton, and of many other very free-and-easy theatrical, artistic, and literary clubs of the hour, nursed very serious and ambitious designs, even while he threw out his pictorial squibs for his daily bread. It is sad to think that even the mighty quantity of work which he got through, and of work that filled publishers' pockets, and set up laughing faces from the Highlands to Portsmouth, was never well paid enough to give him ease to do justice to his genius.

In a note to Mr. Hotten* (April 1865) he said, "The first time that I put a *very large figure* in perspective was about forty years back, in illustrating that part of 'Paradise Lost' where Milton describes Satan as

> 'Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
> Lay floating many a rood.'

This I never published, but possibly I may do so," the intrepid old man adds, "one of these days." In a letter to Mr. J. P. Briscoe he explained how, in 1825,

* Explanatory of his drawing (here reproduced) of the giant Bolster, which forms the frontispiece of Mr. Robert Hunt's "Popular Romances of the West of England."

when his caricatures were in all the shop-windows, he was engaged to illustrate Milton's "Paradise Lost."

"Previous to the year of 1825, I was engaged to illustrate Milton's 'Paradise Lost.' A friend of mine, Mr. Lewis, was to be the editor, and a bookseller in the Strand, near Holywell Street, named Birch, was, I believe, to be the publisher.

"For this work I made two drawings on wood, one was 'Satan, Sin, and Death, at the Gates of Hell,' and the other, 'Satan calling up the fallen Angels.'

'Awake! arise! or be for ever fallen!
They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprang
Upon the wing.'

This illustration was very *crowded with figures*, and *the best drawing that I ever did in my life;* but when the wood engraver saw it, he said he was afraid he could not engrave it: however, it was done and published, but the *block* is missing; however, there is an *impression* of it (No. 116) now exhibiting in the *selection* of my works at the "Royal Aquarium," Westminster, London.

"I expect there had been some kind of arrangement made as to a partnership between the editor and the publisher; but some disagreement followed, which stopped the work, and this is the reason why the subject you mention of the large figure in perspective

'Lay floating many a rood'

was not published; and since then I have had so many matters to attend to, that I don't think I shall ever publish it, nor be able to do an oil painting of the subject, as I always wished to do, being now too much overwhelmed with various engagements."

The light heart and courage with which Cruikshank bore up against many a bitter disappointment like this, hindering his flight to the higher regions of his art, are delightful characteristics of him.

While he was dreaming of Paradise Lost, and designing "the very best drawing he ever did in his life," and the dream and the labour were cast by unkind Fate to to the winds, see how prodigally he was using his genius

as the popular pictorial chronicler, moralist, and provider of laughter of the day.

Not only did he execute the caricatures I have already noted, for and against Queen Caroline; he threw off series after series, as "Doll Tear-Sheet," "The Green Bay," "Non mi ricordo," "Political Lectures on Tails," in which the Prince Regent, Lord Eldon, the Marquis of Conyngham, Lord Castlereagh, and Mr. Wilberforce figured; the King led blindfolded by his evil advisers, Lords Sidmouth and Castlereagh; to say nothing of "The Political Apple Pie," "The Constitutional Apple Pie," "The Men in the Moon," "The Man in the Moon," and the "Political Quixote." The satirical grotesque force and plentifulness of point in these streams of running pictorial commentary on current events, show the acuteness of the artist's intellect, as well as the sleeplessness of his power of observation, the tenderness of his sympathies, and his alertness as a moralist. Moore, dressed as a rough Irish peasant, holding Erin's harp in one hand, and a shillelagh in the other, to protect a basketful of poems on his arm—

while Old Nick is putting a rope round one of his legs, and the other is fettered with the twopenny post bag—is called "Erin's Pocket Apollo." Under the title of "The Botley Showman," William Cobbett is presented, with a peepshow, through which a crone looks, while the devil is grinding a tune on an organ. The proprietor announces the Hampshire Hog and Tom Paine's bones, a flag floats above, inscribed 'How to raise the Wind;' while a bumpkin and his boy look on horror-struck by the idea of the bones being in the box. This drawing is supplemented by a tail-piece, in which we see Cobbett going in a cart to a place of execution, followed by the devil carrying his coffin. And now we light upon Hone tied to a whipping-post, with his companion Old Nick. Lord Castlereagh is holding up the Radical rascal's coat-tails, and flogging him, to the delight of Lord Sidmouth and Vansittart, who are looking on. The moral to this caricature, which is entitled "A Printer and his Devil Restrained," is given in an apt quotation, in Cruikshank's usual manner:—

Lucio. "Why, how now, Claudio? whence comes this restraint?"

Claud. "From too much liberty, my Lucio,—liberty.
A surfeit is the father of much fast;
So every scope, by the immoderate use,
Turns to restraint."

The "Men in the Moon" series (1820), forerunners of Mr. Albert Smith's "Man in the Moon," is all levelled at the Liberals, or Radicals: Cobbett and Hunt, as representatives of the *Weekly Register* and *Reform*, appear as the agents of Satan. A little devil (his Satanic majesty figured largely in all the caricatures of the time, and most public men in their turn were humorously given over to him) perched on a gibbet is waiting, no doubt impatiently, for the souls of the Radicals. A big devil clutches cloven-hoofed Lord Byron, "The Lord of the Faithless," and points to the distant gibbet. Hunt, "knocked out of time" in a pugilistic encounter with Lord Castlereagh, is being "attended to" by his friends —the devil and Cobbett. But so bad were the Radical leaders, that the friendship even of the devil is at last denied them. They appear, with other Radicals, as the

political hydra, and their faithless friend Satan, with his pitchfork, is lending a hand to Lords Castlereagh and Sidmouth, for their destruction. They have an awful end in the hydra's skin, being nailed by the tail to a gibbet, and burned amidst the rejoicing shouts of "the first gentleman in Europe," the Iron Duke, and the King's ministers.

But in "The *Man* in the Moon" the impartial caricaturist has his fling at the King and his ministers. Here the Goddess of Reason protects the liberty of the press from the gag and dagger, which are presented by Lords Castlereagh and Sidmouth, and Canning. The Prince Regent, mounted upon Lord Sidmouth's back, shoots at the cup of liberty. And now his Royal Highness is Guy Fawkes carried by his favourites, Castlereagh and Sidmouth. It was at this time, when Hone appeared tied to a whipping-post, supplied by Cruikshank's needle, that the artist illustrated "The Bank Restriction Barometers," for the incorrigible Radical of Fleet Street, who probably revenged himself upon Cruikshank in St. James's Street, by under-paying him in the city.

The "Barometer" was ingeniously illustrated: at top, Britannia in the full tide of prosperity; at bottom, weeping and dejected, with ships wrecked and children hanged. The gibbet played as conspicuous a part in these daily squibs as the devil.

The Cato Street conspirators gave Cruikshank hand-to-mouth work. He drew the prisoners in the dock. Trifling incidents that hit the public mind brought work to his nimble needle. Mrs. Geoffrey Gubbins became famous, in death, by being buried in an iron coffin which the authorities of St. Andrew's parish declined to deposit in their graveyard. Cruikshank showed churchwarden and beadle astride the open grave. In the midst of all this he drew a frontispiece—to-day for the "Memoirs of Captain Huddart"—on the morrow, for the second volume of Thornton's "Pastorals of Virgil"; and the next day he designed one of those little domestic scenes which he always loved. A little girl is seated under a spreading tree at a cottage door. The village church is in the distance, and a feeble old woman is shambling along the road. The scene of peace is called

"The Adventures of a Bible." From this bit of sentiment the artist could turn swiftly to illustrations called "The Right Divine of Kings to Govern Wrong." What a monster of despotism has the artist conceived! The figure has a huge bomb for a body, cannon for legs. It is armed with fire and sword. Swinging to and fro in chains, it tramples upon and mutilates the mob upon the ground. It wears a crown, and a glory of daggers is the nimbus about its head!

The same hand that drew this monster, turned away to "The White Cat," in which Caroline and her friends are outrageously treated. The vignette is enough. The crown of England is shown in a cage guarded by the sword of Justice against a black cat, the cat being the Queen. In the series we have the old stage properties of the political caricature—the block, the headsman's axe, the gibbet, the guillotine, a coffin, etc. Let us pass on—without even glancing at "The Miraculous Host," and other similar pencillings. This was all very sad pot-boiling; and we respect the artist for the regret with which he looked back upon it.

It was redeemed and put in the shade by better work. Let us glance by way of relief at "Fairy Experience arriving to solemnize the Baptism of Bright Star," and "Prince Iris entertained at a Banquet by Zephyrina and her Nymphs;" * or "The courageous young Girl Rosa plunging into the Water to save her young Mistress, Pulchra, from the Jaws of the Shark," or "The Little Deformed Old Man destroying the huge Serpent which has coiled its folds about his body." Here we discover indications of Cruikshank's fancy in its more gracious moods: we come upon him at home for the first time in fairy-land.

"The Folly of Pride," Italian tales, in which there is a Jew, as in "The Merchant of Venice," embarrassed on being told by Gianetto to "take the pound of flesh from Ansaldo," and "Tales of Irish Life" (1824), and his illustrations to Clinton's "Life of Lord Byron" (1824-5), mark Cruikshank's progress from political caricature to

* Cruikshank's illustrations to Gardener's "Original Tales of my Landlord's School," 1822. Ditto to Gardener's "Royal Present," 1822.

his higher position as an illustrator of books of observation or imagination. Still he had not done with lottery tickets for Swift and Co., and others. Even in 1825 he

Giles Scroggins and Molly Brown.—From "The Universal Songster."

executed a series in which "The Way to Wealth" and "The Chances of Fortune" are shown, with many points of humour, to lie in a lottery office. Then came "The Mornings at Bow Street," in which we have already noted some capital bits of Cruikshank's London

experience; four-and-twenty cuts to "The Universal Songster, or Museum of Mirth,"—coarse bits of street, pot-house, and play-house wit; sixteen illustrations of the humours of sailors' life—the sailors being perfect salts; illustrations to Hone's "Every-Day Book" (1852); twenty-five more wood-cuts to the "Log-Book" (1826-7), full of fun, spirit, and character; some curious bits of mountainous and other scenery in "The Pocket Magazine;" twenty-one cuts to "Philosophy in Sport" (1827)—to say nothing of diagrams; three quaint bits to Walpole's "Anecdotes of Painters;" twenty-four "More Mornings at Bow-Street;" a vignette, "Bolton reclining in the Fairies' Bower;" a frontispiece to "Harcourt's Jests;" etchings of many of A. Crowquill's drawings; and "Punch and Judy" (1827-8). In these latter careful etchings the power of Cruikshank to inform a puppet with life, and keep it wooden still, is conspicuous. He has related how he studied his subject:—

"Having been engaged by Mr. Prowett, the publisher, to give the various scenes represented in the

The Three Thimbles.

Michael in search of his Wife. "*Love* is the soul of a nate Irishman."
From "More Mornings at Bow Street."

street performances of 'Punch and Judy,' I obtained the address of the proprietor and performer of that popular exhibition. He was an elderly Italian, of the name of Piccini, whom I remembered from boyhood, and he lived at a low public-house, the sign of The 'King's

"Philosophy in Sport."

Arms,' in the 'Coal Yard,' Drury Lane. Having made arrangements for a 'morning performance,' one of the window frames on the first-floor of the public-house was taken out, and the stand, or Punch's theatre, was hauled into the 'club-room.' Mr. Payne Collier (who was to write the description), the publisher, and myself, formed the audience; and as the performance went on, I stopped

it at the most interesting parts, to sketch the figures, whilst Mr. Collier noted down the dialogue, and thus the whole is a faithful copy and description of the various scenes represented by this Italian, whose performance of 'Punch' was far superior in every respect to anything of the sort to be seen at the present day. The figure whose neck he used to stretch to such a great height was a sort of interlude. Piccini made the figure take off his hat with one hand, which he defied all other puppet-show performers to do. Piccini announced the approach of Punch by sound of trumpet."

Even now I have but glanced at the more important subjects on the list. How infinitely various is the humour! how wide and searching, I must repeat, is the observation! Could anything be better than these "Four Specimens of the Reading Public"? Here is Romancing Molly, a servant-girl, asking for "rum-ances in five wollums;" at her elbow is Sir Harry Luscious, a feeble old sinner, inquiring for the first volume of "Harriette Wilson" (to which, by the way, Cruikshank furnished some etchings after Dighton's caricatures); next

to Sir Harry comes, of course, Cruikshank's favourite figure, the Dustman, his dirty hand thrust into his pocket for the price of a "Cobbett"; and the fourth reader is "Frank à la Mode,' a scented fop, with his poodle, who

John Gilpin.

wants to know whether "Waverley's new novel is out." After Punch, in quick succession came illustrations to Hood's "Epping Hunt," and to Cowper's Mr. "John Gilpin," wherein Cruikshank, as a pure humourist, is at his best.

"Famous books in their day were Cruikshank's 'John Gilpin' and 'Epping Hunt,'" says Thackeray; "for though our artist does not draw horses very scientifically,—to use a phrase of the *atelier*, he *feels* them very keenly; and his queer animals, after one is used to them, answer quite as well as better. Neither is he very happy in trees, and such rustical produce; or rather, we should say, he is very original, his trees being decidedly of his own make and composition, not imitated from any master. . . . The horses of John Gilpin are much more of the equestrian order; and, as here, the artist has only his favourite suburban buildings to draw; not a word is to be said against his design. . . . The rush, and shouting, and clatter are here excellently depicted by the artist; and we, who have been scoffing at his manner of designing animals, must here make a special exception in favour of the hens and chickens; each has a different action, and is curiously natural. Happy are children of all ages who have such a ballad and such pictures as this in store for them!"

The miscellaneous activities of the decade over which

The Epping Hunt.

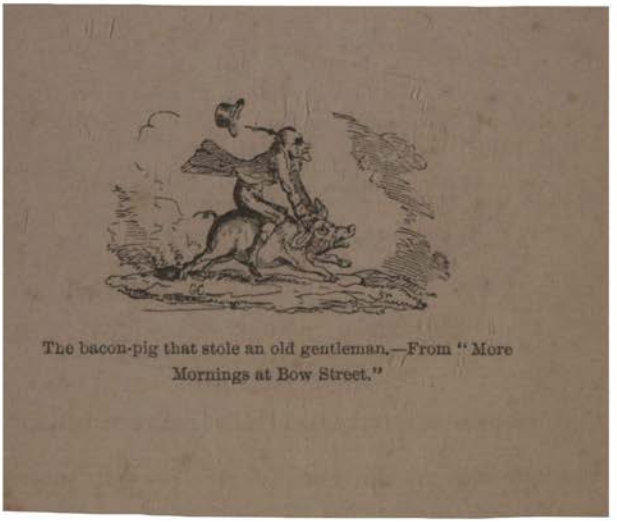
we have been rapidly passing were brought to a close by a series of woodcuts on "The Murder of Maria Martin." The gibbet never had a more unrelenting foe

The Old Commodore.—From "The Universal Songster."

than George Cruikshank. His satire would, in the main, apply with equal force, unhappily, to a murder of the present day. "The Halter Selling by Auction" is the first cut. Jack Ketch offers the rope at a guinea

an inch, while a curious crowd gloats over the body of the murderer. A lady, who has obtained a front place, exclaims, "Oh, how delightfully horrible!" In another corner the sheriff takes the murderer's pistols from the gaoler, saying he would not part with them for a hundred guineas.

We find ladies with opera-glasses in "front places" still, at "sensational" trials for murder.

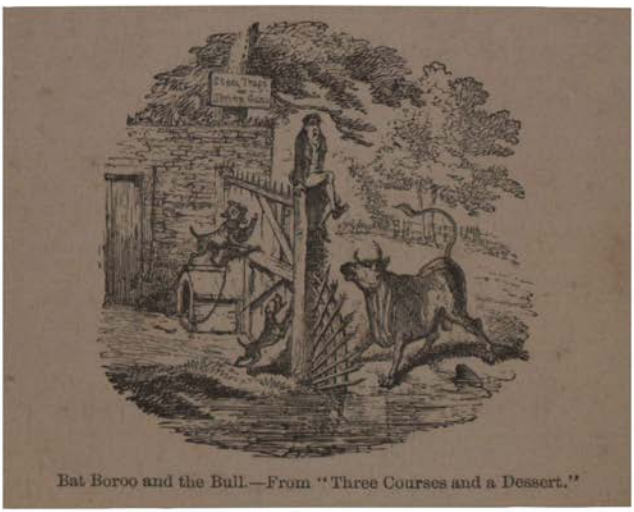


The bacon-pig that stole an old gentleman.—From "More Mornings at Bow Street."

CHAPTER VII.

THREE COURSES AND A DESSERT.

THE "Three Courses and a Dessert," which Mr. William Clarke spread before the public some fifty years



Bat Boroo and the Bull.—From "Three Courses and a Dessert."

ago, are not to the taste of this present generation. These pleasant papers on life in the "down-a-long" shires, in Ireland, and in London, ended by a medley

by way of dessert, are as obsolete as the ways of life they chronicled. The Ralph and Harry Hickorys of our day are but poor wrestlers, and are absolutely ignorant of backsword. The singlestick players of Somerset are no longer doughty yeomen of the old school; and "Hopping John made Tom Nottle's fashion,"* it is to be hoped, has become an unknown tipple. Sir Matthew Ale, the west country squire, with a face strongly resembling a frothing mug of beer, who gave up his time to his apotheosis of John Barleycorn, has gone to his fathers, and the record of his singlestick and drinking bouts with him. His descendant is sipping a light claret sparingly, and possibly playing croquet or lawn tennis on very warm afternoons. He gives not even one pig with a greasy tail to be caught as a prize at the village fair; nor does he entertain the cobblers of his neighbourhood with a barrel of strong ale, "in order to keep up the good old custom of Crispin's sons drain-

* A pint of brandy to a gallon of cider, sugared, and warmed by a dozen hissing roasted apples bobbing in the bowl.

ing a horn of malt liquor, in which a lighted candle was placed, without singeing their faces, if they could." Even Mr. Clarke's "Dessert," albeit various, is remembered chiefly by the artist's immortal plate of the deaf postilion. Yet how excellent are Mr. Clarke's

A dog that had a fancy for killing his own mutton.—From "Three Courses and a Dessert."

dishes! How well he tells a story! how he contrives to fasten a character in your mind, and in the course of a few pages to drag you heart and soul into his company! * In his modest preface he says he hopes

* The book ran through two editions in the year of original publication; in 1836 a third edition was issued; it was re-

that even if the *dishes* be disliked, the *plates* at least will please. They have more than pleased. They are all that lives in the minds of most men of the banquet, having fallen into the hands of collectors. And yet even Mr. Clarke had a hand in this. "He feels bound to state," he remarked, in the handsome first edition of his work, "that whatever faults the decorations may be chargeable with on the score of invention, he alone is to blame, and not Mr. George Cruikshank, to whom he is deeply indebted for having embellished his rude sketches in their transfer to wood, and translated them into a proper pictorial state, to make their appearance in public." They have necessarily acquired a value, which they did not intrinsically possess, in passing through the hands of that distinguished artist, of whom it may truly, and on this occasion especially, be said, "Quod tetigit,

published in 1849, and was added to Bohn's Illustrated Library in 1852. But so completely has the author disappeared (albeit he gave the artist the sketches for his pictures), that in the London Library catalogue the book is called "George Cruikshank's Three Courses and a Dessert."

ornavit." Little did the author think that even his hand in the drawings would be forgotten, and that "Three Courses and a Dessert" would be spoken of as a book in which some of George Cruikshank's best bits of humorous illustration on wood, exquisitely en-

The Counterpart Cousins.—From "Three Courses and a Dessert."

graved,* are to be found. Mr. Clarke's West Country, Irish, and Legal Stories deserved a better fate; they are bright, full of humour and observation of character, and the style is easy and graceful.

* Messrs. Williams, Vizetelly, Thompson, and E. Landells admirably caught the peculiar flow and effective confusion and involvement of Cruikshank's lines on wood.

In these illustrations are some of Cruikshank's most astonishing feats in the way of making inanimate things laugh and speak. Take the three lemons which serve for introduction to "the Dessert." Most charming as to pencilling and engraving, they are exquisitely humorous. Remaining lemons that you might squeeze, they are three still convivial fellows in close confabulation.

The portrait of an old Irish boy, the hoops of the keg serving for nightcap, which introduces the second course of Irish dishes, is a jewel of a boy.

These illustrations delighted Thackeray. He has transferred some of them to his essay in the *Westminster*.

"Is there," he asks of a battle of bottles on spider legs, "any need of having a face after this?* 'Come on,' says Claret-bottle, a dashing, genteel fellow, with his hat on one ear, 'come on; has any man a mind to tap me?' Claret-bottle is a little screwed (as one

* This illustration is not in "Three Courses and a Dessert."

may see by his legs), but full of gaiety and courage. Not so that stout, apoplectic Bottle of Rum, who has staggered against the wall, and has his hand upon his liver; the fellow hurts himself with smoking, that is clear, and is as sick as sick can be. See, Port is making away from the storm, and Double X is as flat as ditch-

A Mushroom Aristocrat.—From "Three courses and a Dessert."

water. Against these, awful in their white robes, the sober watchmen come."

Again the artist moulds an Irish physiognomy upon a keg of whisky, or gives us a mushroom aristocrat,—or imparts a venerable human aspect to a mug of ale.

The mushroom is a triumph. "You'd think," says the story, "that Purcell's pride might be brought down a little by what had befallen him; but no,—he strutted

out of the cabin without condescending to say *be baw*, or a civil word to any one, and rode off to The Beg—mushroom as he was—with his nose in the air, as though the ground wasn't good enough for him to look on." Only Cruikshank could have turned this veritable mushroom into so proud a man, and left the mushroom obviously the fungus of which catsup is made. Cruikshank was never tired of making still life quick life.

The deaf postilion is a masterpiece of acute observation. There is, to begin with, the suggestion of a pleasant landscape. The story is complete. The body of the chariot, with the runaway couple in it, broken away from the shafts and fore-wheels; the excited swain stretching out of the window, and bawling his hardest to the postilion, who, deaf as a door-post (never was deafness more forcibly expressed in a human countenance), is jogging on with the fore-wheels, unconscious that any *contretemps* has happened; and the startled cow, gazing wildly over the hedge, make

* "George Cruikshank's Table Book."

up one of Cruikshank's completest triumphs as a humorous illustrator. How closely, how searchingly had he read men and things! How thoroughly had he become a master of expression! In this illustration to Clarke's whimsical poem, in Hood's style, "The Dos-a-Dos Tête-à-Tête," you can almost hear the man snoring, and yet it is a mere outline of a face.

Says the lady :—

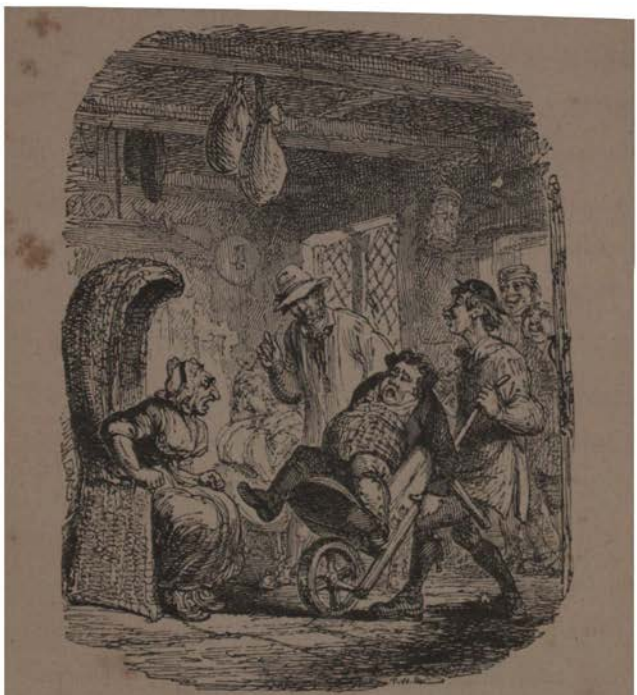
> "When I had in some cordials so rich,
> With letters all labelled quite handy,
> Says you, 'I'll inquire, you old witch,
> If O.D.V. doesn't mean brandy!'
> Whenever I sink to repose,
> You rouse me, you wretch, with a sneeze;
> And lastly, if I *doze-a-doze*,
> To *wex* me, you just *wheeze-a-wheeze*."

Then we have an Irish scene! The drunken piper; the pigs who have upset a basket of live crabs, the excited group looking in through the door, the dog barking at the man in bed, the crab pinching the little porker's tail. What life is here! and all true to the main incident of the scene. You don't want the letterpress to

read the story. The pigs have got into the room to attack the basket of crabs. Pompey, who has been tied to his master's toe to wake him in case of danger, is tugging away in mortal fear of the old sow, who is scratching the good man's foot with her bristles. The noise has set Corney Carolum, only half sober and half away, droning upon his pipes. The clatter has brought the children from their beds to the door. The fowls in the rafters are clucking and crowing. "All this noise," says the author, "couldn't go for nothing; the whole place was in arms. Mick Maguire fired off his gun through a hole in the thatch, and Bat Boroo, flourishing his big stick, took Mick under his command, for he thought the French was landed, at the least; and no blame to him."

Cruikshank's illustrations to William Clarke's book, and his twelve etchings to Walter Scott's "Demonology" (there are no finer examples of his imaginative and executive powers), both issued in 1830, were the starting-points of his career as an illustrator of books; that is, of his career at the maturity of his power.

The lustrum between the date of the appearance of "Three Courses and a Dessert" and Cruikshank's



Habbakuk Bulwrinkle.—From "Three Courses and a Dessert."

appearance as the illustrator of "Boz" was a purification to his genius. During this time, albeit he was still compelled to do daily-bread work unworthy

of his genius, he buckled to labours, by some of which his name is destined to live. In 1831 he undertook to illustrate Roscoe's Novelists' Library; and his genius brightens some seventeen volumes of the series.* But his fertility—and in his best vein between 1830 and the year when he and Dickens came in contact—was prodigious. In addition to his forty-nine etchings to "Tom Jones," "Amelia," "Roderick Random," "Joseph Andrews," "Tristram Shandy," "The Vicar of Wakefield," "Don Quixote," "Gil Blas," etc., in Roscoe's Library, "Beauties of Washington Irving," "Baron Munchausen," he illustrated "The Gentleman in Black," "The New Bath Guide," "Hood's Comic Annual," "Sunday in London" (curious as studies of the fashions of the day) (1833), Defoe's "Journal of the Plague," "Bombastes Furioso," in which he revelled,

* The complete set is in nineteen volumes—the first two volumes, containing Robinson Crusoe, were illustrated by Jacob George Strutt. Cruikshank, however, illustrated a Robinson Crusoe with two steel plates and some thirty small woodcuts in 1831. It was reprinted in 1836.

Ainsworth's "Rookwood," "Tough Yarns," "Odds and Ends," "Mirth and Morality" (a collection of original tales by Carlton Bruce, published by Tegg), and "Minor Morals for Young People," by his friend John Bowring. Within this period, moreover, he began his Comic Almanacs, and his fine series of illustrations to the Waverley Novels; and he superintended the collection of his more important scattered works, as his large French caricatures, retouching them, for Mr. M'Lean, the eminent print-seller of the Haymarket. I pass over much minor work as his drawings or etchings from the sketches of others, as Auldjo's "Constantinople." The third and fourth parts of his "Scraps and Sketches," and his "Sketch-Book"—in which are some of his most famous bits—are also of this most fruitful epoch. In these we find some of his hardest hits against intemperance, as in the Gin Shop, where Death is setting a trap for a party of drinkers, who, with their young children, are tippling at the bar of a public-house; and the Alehouse and the Home, and the Pillars of the Gin Shop. In the first

composition we have the parlour of a tavern, where, in the midst of the uproarious conviviality, a boy is trying to wake his drunken father; in the second is the wretched home, with the poor wife nursing a sick child. So far back as 1832 this chord had been struck in Cruikshank's heart. In the Pillars of the Gin Shop (also of this time), a drunkard and his wife, with their poor children, are watched by the arch-fiend, who is perched near a stile in the distance.

Mr. Charles Wylie notes* that—"Of the nineteen volumes of which that admirable series of books, Roscoe's Novelists' Library, consists, seventeen were illustrated by George Cruikshank. The two in which he was not concerned have illustrations on India-paper by Strutt and others. . . . There can be no doubt that Defoe's story was the first published, as an advertisement in the duplicated No. I. volume refers to it as already out. 'Humphrey Clinker' (the *second* No. I.

* *Notes and Queries*, 4th series, vol. vi., Nov. 12, 1870.

volume) was illustrated by George Cruikshank, as were all the subsequent issues. As a matter of fact, therefore, George Cruikshank never discontinued his connection with the work, but two volumes were published before he commenced it. It would appear that the publishers made a change in their original plan, for the advertisement prefixed to 'Robinson Crusoe' states that the Novelists' Library, edited by Thomas Roscoe, will be illustrated 'from designs, original or selected,' by 'Jacob George Strutt,' who, as I have already said, was concerned in the first two volumes. The advertisement to 'Humphrey Clinker' is identically the same as that to 'Robinson Crusoe,' except that the name of George Cruikshank appears in place of J. G. Strutt; and a paragraph is added stating that he, G. Cruikshank, 'is engaged to illustrate the whole series of the Novelists' Library, which, with the exception mentioned, he did. . . . The volumes appeared monthly, the first issue being in May 1831."

The fact was that Mr. Roscoe began with Strutt, found him a failure, and then started *de novo* with

George Cruikshank, whose genius carried him triumphantly through seventeen volumes.

How strangely various were Cruikshank's creations! The eminent surgeon, the late Mr. Pettigrew,* was, it will be remembered, his intimate friend; and for him he executed a series of carefully drawn plates for his "History of Egyptian Mummies" (1833).† Even now he was not quite quit of political caricatures and headings to popular songs. He satirized quack qill vendors. In 1831, he lent a hand to the Reform movement—albeit he was a very moderate Liberal, even in his youth, if we are to judge by the way in which his pencil was employed against Cobbett. The Reform

* Doctor Pettigrew, the family doctor of Cruikshank's family, was among the few who exercised a little authority over the turbulent and self-willed George. When his fortunes grew, and he became assistant surgeon to the Duchess of Kent, then librarian to the Duke of Sussex, and afterwards Mummy Pettigrew and a personage of his time, Cruikshank was a constant guest at his table, as well as an artist at his service.

† "Reading lately a very appreciative lecture just republished in pamphlet form by Mr. Walter Hamilton on the genius and

Bill drew from him "Sweeping Measures; or, Making a Clean House"—an etching in which Lord John Russell appears with an immense "Reform" broom, sweeping the Opposition out of the House of Commons—the Opposition consisting of owls, spiders, and vermin. The Chancellor, almost buried under petitions, cries, "Aye, I thought this rotten rubbish would make a fine dust." Then he put upon stone (1832) a squib called

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art-work of George Cruikshank, I found mention made of a fact hitherto unknown to me; to wit, that George executed, many years ago, a series of very careful anatomical drawings for a work on Egyptian mummies, written by the late eminent surgeon, Mr. Pettigrew. G. C. an anatomist! For the moment I was puzzled. Yet how strangely do things come together! I happened to be turning over a ragged little old folio, of the date of 1825, entitled 'Anatomy of the Bones and Muscles, for the use of Artists and Members of the Artists' Anatomical Society,' by George Simpson, surgeon; and in the list of subscribers attached to the work I found the name of 'George Cruickshank, Esq.' (they *would* spell his surname with two c's), Myddelton Terrace, Pentonville. '*Eureka!*' I cried. It was at the feet of George Simpson, surgeon, then, that George studied osteology and myology."—"*Echoes of the Week*," *by G. A. Sala: Illustrated London News.*

"Cholera Consultation," in which "the Central Board of Health" are represented at a sumptuous dinner, drinking toasts to their own prosperity.

On looking over all this scattering of the sparks of great genius through wide fields; at the woful waste of much of the light and heat; at the hard and stern

Under the Thumb.—From "Three Courses and a Dessert."

necessity which compelled the most thoughtful, suggestive, observant, and imaginative artist of his day to illustrate doggerel, furnish frontispieces to poor dramas, and to put the sketches of others upon wood, in the interval of such congenial labour of a noble kind as we find scattered through Roscoe's series, in the "Demonology," and in his own separate albums of wit, humour, and human wisdom, it is impossible not to

lament, with Mr. Ruskin, that the Fates were so unkind to one so gifted, or that his wildly convivial temperament and wasteful ways of life in the earlier half of his career made him so sad a husbandman of his powers.

The Witch's Switch.—From "Three Courses and a Dessert."

CHAPTER VIII.

SKETCHES BY BOZ, OLIVER TWIST, AND THE LIFE OF GRIMALDI.

THAT the author of "Three Courses and a Dessert" made a fair mark with his book, apart and distinct from Cruikshank, is proved in a curious way. In November 1838, Messrs. Chapman and Hall published a little volume called the "Squib Annual," with plates by Seymour. This led to a suggestion from the artist, of a series of cockney sporting plates. The publishers assented,—adding that they should be accompanied by letterpress, and published monthly. But who should be the author? So popular had Mr. Clarke's book been, that the publishers first sent to him; and it was only after they had found that his yearly engagement with Messrs. Vizetelly and Co. prevented him from accepting their commission, and

the affair had lain dormant a month or two in consequence, that they turned to the author of Sketches signed "Boz," which had been lately appearing in the *Monthly Magazine*, and were about to be issued (1836) in two duodecimo volumes. Mr. Forster tells us that they came forth with a preface in which the author spoke of the nervousness he should have had in venturing alone before the public, and of his delight in getting the help of Cruikshank, who had frequently contributed to the success, though his well-earned reputation rendered it impossible for him ever to have shared the hazard, of similar undertakings. It has been said that Cruikshank knew more of London than the author of the Sketches which he illustrated. He may have had a longer experience of London streets and mysteries; but Dickens, in his London Sketches, written before he came in contact with the artist, had proved how deeply his young eyes had penetrated the mysteries of the great city, and how thoroughly his fresh heart had been stirred.

The first paper is on "Our Parish." In this lies

the germ of Oliver Twist. Simmons is the father of Bumble. But scattered through the Sketches may be found all the experience of which Oliver Twist was the riper and more artistic and dramatic expression. The career of the Parish Boy was exactly the romance the author of these wonderful pictures of London would write. Had Cruikshank suggested these, and led the young author from scene to scene, we might have understood part of his claim to the conception of the romance; but he was called in by the publisher, Macrone, to illustrate the magazine papers which he had bought for republication from the young author for a trifle.

It is a strange coincidence that the representatives of Seymour, after his death, claimed for him some share in the invention of *Pickwick*. But Dickens was alive to set this pretension at rest for ever, and others were at hand to bear witness to the fidelity of his memory. Seymour never originated nor suggested "an incident, a phrase, or a word," and died when only twenty-four pages had been published. The very name originally belonged to a celebrated coach proprietor of Bath; and

even the immortal figure of Mr. Pickwick is but a faithful portrait of Dickens's model, a Mr. Foster, who lived at the time at Richmond.

Pleased as Dickens was to see Cruikshank illustrating his pages, it was not to him he (or his publishers) turned when poor Seymour suddenly disappeared from the scene, but to Hablot K. Browne, who, as Phiz, became afterwards associated with Boz's greatest triumphs.

But while *Pickwick* was running its triumphant career, Dickens made arrangements that were destined to bring him into relations with Cruikshank a second time. In August 1836, when the sixth number of *Pickwick* was about to be issued, Dickens signed an agreement with the late Mr. Bentley, to undertake the editorship of a monthly magazine, to be started in the following January.* In this magazine Dickens was to "run" a

* When the *Miscellany*, with Dickens for editor, was resolved upon, the late Mr. Bentley observed at a dinner given to complete preliminaries, "that the first title suggested was the *Wits'*

serial story; and on this story his mind was bent, and he even worked hard at it, before he had finished *Pickwick*.

I will now set before the reader impartially the story of Cruikshank's contention as to his share in "Oliver Twist." In his letter to the *Times*, Cruikshank said :—

"When *Bentley's Miscellany* was first started, it was arranged that Mr. Charles Dickens should write a serial in it, and which was to be illustrated by me; and in a conversation with him as to what the subject should be for the first serial, I suggested to Mr. Dickens that he should write the life of a London boy, and strongly advised him to do this, assuring him that I would furnish him with the subject, and supply him with all the characters, which my large experience of London life would enable me to do.

"My idea was to raise a boy from a most humble

Magazine. But now," he added, "we have settled to call it simply *Bentley's Miscellany*." "Why have gone to the opposite extreme?" cried Jerdan. So the work was entered upon with a hearty laugh.

position up to a high and respectable one—in fact, to illustrate one of those cases of common occurrence where men of humble origin, by natural ability, industry, honest and honourable conduct, raise themselves to first-class positions in society. As I wished particularly to bring the habits and manners of the thieves of London before the public (and this for a most important purpose, which I shall explain one of these days), I suggested that the poor boy should fall among thieves, but that his honesty and natural good disposition should enable him to pass through this ordeal without contamination; and after I had fully described the full-grown thieves (the *Bill Sykeses*) and their female companions, also the young thieves (the *Artful Dodgers*) and the receivers of stolen goods, Mr. Dickens agreed to act on my suggestion, and the work was commenced, but we differed as to what sort of boy the hero should be. Mr. Dickens wanted rather a queer kind of chap; and, although this was contrary to my original idea, I complied with his request, feeling that it would not be right to dictate too much to the writer of the

story, and then appeared 'Oliver Asking for More'; but it so happened just about this time that an inquiry was being made in the parish of St. James's, Westminster, as to the cause of the death of some of the workhouse children who had been 'farmed out.' I called the attention of Mr. Dickens to this inquiry, and said that if he took up this matter, his doing so might help to save many a poor child from injury and death; and I earnestly begged of him to let me make Oliver a nice pretty little boy; and if we so represented him, the public—and particularly the ladies—would be sure to take a greater interest in him, and the work would then be a certain success. Mr. Dickens agreed to that request, and I need not add here that my prophecy was fulfilled; and if any one will take the trouble to look at my representations of 'Oliver,' they will see that the appearance of the boy is altered after the two first illustrations, and, by a reference to the records of St. James's parish, and to the date of the publication of the *Miscellany*, they will see that both the dates tally, and therefore support my statement.

"I had, a long time previously to this, directed Mr. Dickens's attention to Field Lane, Holborn Hill, wherein resided many thieves and receivers of stolen goods, and it was suggested that one of these receivers, a Jew, should be introduced into the story; and upon one occasion Mr. Dickens and Mr. Harrison Ainsworth called upon me, and in course of conversation I described and performed the character of one of these Jew receivers,—and this was the origin of Fagin."

Cruikshank maintained that his designs were all the result of consultations with Dickens—in which he was as much the creator as the author; and that he never saw any of the MS. of the novel until it was nearly finished. No; he saw the proofs of the early sheets. The family tradition was to the effect that Dickens, calling one day in Amwell Street, saw a series of illustrations which Cruikshank had prepared for a story he had in his mind of the life of a thief. Dickens was so struck with them, and with the artist's account of his plan, that he determined to make London the scene

of Oliver Twist's adventures. Cruikshank's intimate knowledge of low life in every part of London made him the most efficient and penetrating illustrator of Dickens's book: this, and nothing more.

And now let me quote Mr. Forster's summary dismissal of the charge—for it is nothing less—that Dickens was indebted to Cruikshank for the idea, and for many of the incidents and characters, of "Oliver Twist."

"The publication had been announced for October, but the third volume illustrations interrupted it a little. This part of the story, as we have seen, had been written in anticipation of the magazine, and the designs for it having to be executed 'in a lump,' were necessarily done somewhat hastily. The matter supplied in advance of the monthly portions in the magazine formed the bulk of the last volume as published in the book; and for this the plates had to be prepared by Cruikshank, also in advance of the Magazine, to furnish them in time for the separate publications; Sykes and his Dog, Fagin in

the Cell, and Rose Maylie and Oliver, being the three last. None of these Dickens had seen until he saw them in the book on the eve of publication, when he so strongly objected to one of them, that it had to be cancelled. 'I returned suddenly to town yesterday afternoon,' he wrote to the artist at the end of October, 'to look at the latter pages of "Oliver Twist" before it was delivered to the booksellers, when I saw the majority of the plates in the last volume for the first time. With reference to the last one—Rose Maylie and Oliver—without entering into the question of great haste, or any other cause, which may have led to its being what it is, I am quite sure there can be little difference of opinion between us with respect to the result. May I ask you whether you will object to designing this plate afresh, and doing so *at once*, in order that as few impressions as possible of the present one may go forth? I feel confident you know me too well to feel hurt by this inquiry, and with equal confidence in you I have lost no time in preferring it.' This letter, printed from a copy in Dickens's handwriting, fortunately committed

to my keeping,* entirely disposes of a wonderful story, originally promulgated in America, with a minute conscientiousness and particularity of detail that might have raised the reputation of Sir Benjamin Backbite himself. Whether all Sir Benjamin's laurels, however, should fall to the original teller of the tale, or whether any part of them is the property of the alleged authority from which he says he received it, is unfortunately not quite clear. There would hardly have been a doubt, if the fable had been confined to the other side of the Atlantic, but it has been reproduced and widely circulated on this side also, and the distinguished artist whom it calumniates by fathering its invention upon him, either not conscious of it, or not caring to defend himself, has been left undefended from the slander. By my ability to produce Dickens's letter, I am spared the necessity of characterizing the tale, myself, by the one unpolite word (in three letters) which alone would have been applicable to it."

* Mr. Forster printed a facsimile of the letter in his second volume.

Cruikshank was alive, and living within half an hour's drive of Mr. Forster's library, when he put the case in this roundabout, and, I must say, unwarrantably uncivil way. But let us see what this story was that came from across the Atlantic in the columns of the *Round Table*. It is Dr. Shelton Mackenzie who speaks. "In London I was intimate with the brothers Cruikshank, Robert and George, but more particularly the latter. Having called upon him one day at his house (it was then in Myddelton Terrace, Pentonville), I had to wait while he was finishing an etching, for which a printer's boy was waiting. To while away the time, I gladly complied with his suggestion that I should look over a portfolio crowded with etchings, proofs, and drawings, which lay upon the sofa. Among these, carelessly tied together in a wrap of brown paper, was a series of some twenty-five or thirty drawings, very carefully finished, through most of which were carried the well-known portraits of Fagin, Bill Sykes and his Dog, Nancy, the Artful Dodger, and Master Charles Bates—all well known to the readers of "Oliver Twist." There was no mistake

about it; and when Cruikshank turned round, his work finished, I said as much. He told me that it had long been in his mind to show the life of a London thief by a series of drawings engraved by himself, in which, without a single line of letterpress, the story would be strikingly and clearly told. 'Dickens,' he continued, 'dropped in here one day, just as you have done, and, whilst waiting until I could speak with him, took up that identical portfolio, and ferreted out that bundle of drawings. When he came to that one which represents Fagin in the condemned cell, he studied it for half an hour, and told me that he was tempted to change the whole plot of his story, not to carry Oliver Twist through adventures in the country, but to take him up into the thieves' den in London, show what their life was, and bring Oliver through it without sin or shame. I consented to let him write up to as many of the designs as he thought would suit his purpose, and that was the way in which Fagin, Sikes, and Nancy were created. My drawings suggested them, rather than individuality suggesting (*sic*) my drawings.'" Mr. Forster adds,

"Since this was in type I have seen the Life of Dickens published in America (Philadelphia: Peterson Brothers) by Dr. Shelton Mackenzie, in which I regret to find this story literally repeated. The only differences from it as here quoted are that 1847 is given as the date of the visit; that besides the 'portraits' named, there are said to have been 'many others who were not introduced;' and that the final words run thus: 'My drawings suggested them, rather than his strong individuality my drawings.'"

In 1872, George Cruikshank published his "Statement of Facts" on this subject, and on his subsequent controversy with Mr. Harrison Ainsworth. This is his final reply to Mr. Forster. I give it that the reader may draw his own conclusions.

"A question has been asked *publicly*," says the artist, "and which, I grant, is rather an important one in this case, and that is, *Why have I not until lately claimed to be the originator of 'Oliver Twist'?* To this I reply, that ever since these works were published, and even when they were in progress, I have in private society,

when conversing upon such matters, always explained that the *original ideas and characters* of these works *emanated from me;* and the reason why I *publicly* claimed to be the originator of 'Oliver Twist' was to defend Dr. R. Shelton Mackenzie, who was charged by Mr. John Forster, in his 'Life of Mr. Charles Dickens,' with publishing a *falsehood* * (or a word of '*three letters*,' as he describes it), whereas the Doctor was only repeating what I had told him at the time 'Oliver Twist' was in progress. Mr. Forster designates Dr. Mackenzie's statement as 'a wonderful story,' or 'a marvellous fable;' and in a letter from the Doctor in the *Philadelphia Press*, December 19th, 1871, he says, '*My wonderful story was printed in an American periodical years before Mr. Dickens died;*' and then asks, 'Why did not Mr. Forster inquire into this matter at the time? for surely he must have known it.' And I presume Mr. Dickens must have heard of this 'wonderful story,' the truth of which he *did not deny—for this reason, be-*

* Mr. Forster, in a side-note, puts it thus: "Falsehood ascribed to a distinguished artist"

cause he could not. And with respect to Mr. Ainsworth's insinuation as to my 'labouring under a delusion' upon this point, as all my literary friends at that time knew that I was the originator of 'Oliver Twist,' and as Mr. Ainsworth and I were at that time upon such intimate terms, and both working together on *Bentley's Miscellany,* is it at all likely that I should have concealed such a fact from him? No, no! he knew this as well as I did, and therefore, in this matter at any rate, it is *he* who is 'labouring under a delusion.' And I will here refer to a part of my letter, which was published in the *Times,* December 30th, 1871, upon the origin of 'Oliver Twist,' wherein I state that Mr. Ainsworth and Mr. Dickens came together one day to my house, upon which occasion it so happened that I then and there *described* and *performed* the character of 'Fagin,' for Mr. Dickens to introduce into the work as a 'receiver of stolen goods,' and that some time after this, upon seeing Mr. Ainsworth again, he said to me, 'I was so much struck with your description of that Jew to Mr. Dickens, that I think you and I could do some-

thing together.' Now I do not know whether Mr. Ainsworth has ever made any allusion to this,—perhaps he *disdains* to do so,—but perhaps he may give this also a 'positive contradiction,' and if he does, then all I have to say is, that his memory is gone."

This controversy, and a subsequent one, arose from Cruikshank's habit of exaggeration in all things.

One day, at an engraver's, seeing a drawing of animated pumps (probably one of the series by his brother Robert) upon the table, he shouted, "My pumps!" seized the drawing, made for the door, and was with difficulty persuaded to give it up.

In his eagerness he had a habit of over-estimating the effect of his work, as well as his share in any enterprise in which he had a part. Thus *he* put down hanging for minor offences ; *he* suppressed fairs, because he exposed the coarseness and vice of Bartholomew Fair;* and so

* In a note to the catalogue of his works, now in the Aquarium, London, Cruikshank has put this note : "Bartholomew Fair, held formerly in Smithfield, used to be opened by the Lord Mayor of London, in his coach and six. In ancient

in his later day he was ready, and with thorough conscientiousness, to attribute nearly all the advance of the temperance cause in society to his "Bottle," "Drunkard's Children," and "Triumph of Bacchus." It was this belief in himself that carried him forward, and kept him alert and vigorous in the cause long after he had completed his threescore years and ten. But it led him into injudicious statements, or over-statements, of which those in regard to his share in "Oliver Twist" was certainly the most unfortunate. His pretensions that he supplied not only subjects for his own plates, but

times this fair might have been a very decent affair; but as the metropolis increased in size, the number of thieves and low characters increased also, so that at length this fair, in the evening part, became a scene of ruffianism. I had a peep at it on one or two occasions, and then published this 'Fiend's Frying Pan,' dedicating it to the Lord Mayor, aldermen, etc., who, after a few years began to look at the fair in the same light as myself, and at last put an end to that which was a disgrace to the city." Yet in his illustrations to the "Sketches by Boz,' he drew all the humours of a dancing booth at Greenwich Fair, with riotous men in dancing bonnets, and women equally dissipated, "footing it" in men's hats. Neither in the article nor the drawing is there any moralising.

skeletons of chapters to Dickens and Ainsworth, might be disposed of by fifty collateral testimonies to the contrary.

Writing to Forster (January 1838), Dickens says, alluding to the severity of his labours, "I have not done the 'Young Gentlemen,' nor written the preface to 'Grimaldi,' nor thought of 'Oliver Twist,' or *even supplied a subject for the plate.*"

According to Mr. Ainsworth, Dickens was even so worried by Cruikshank putting forward suggestions that he resolved to send him only printed proofs for illustration.

Cuthbert Bede says, having been informed, of course, by the artist, "It is well known that Cruikshank originated the 'Life in London.'" But this, as the reader will perceive, is a gross error. To the conception of this work, at any rate, the artist made no claim in Egan's time, nor, it should be remembered, was he even the sole illustrator. He shared the honours with his brother. Besides, the three heroes bear unmistakable marks of the Egan parentage throughout.

Perhaps the wildest claim Cruikshank ever entered to an idea was that of having originated the pattern of a military hat worn by the Russian soldiers. Having described his own model, he adds: "The Russian soldiers, I find, wear a hat something of this shape *now;* and no doubt they saw my pattern, and stole my idea." *

In "the corrections made in the later editions of the first volume" of his "Life of Dickens," and published in the second volume (October 1872), Mr. Forster notices Cruikshank's assumption of the responsibility of Dr. Mackenzie's statement, and remarks, "The worst part of the foregoing fable, therefore, has not Dr. Mackenzie for its author; and Mr. Cruikshank is to be congratulated on the prudence of his rigid silence respecting it as long as Mr. Dickens lived."

Suppose Cruikshank suggested to Dickens that his subject should be a poor boy thrown upon the skirts of London. It is but the motive, the theme. In all

* "A Popgun fired off by George Cruikshank." W. Kent and Co.

the range of Dickens's work, there is nothing more essentially his own than "Oliver Twist," from the name of the hero to the last line of the final chapter. Something like the following scene, which Cuthbert Bede describes, may have taken place between Dickens and Cruikshank. From the bare suggestion that there should be an "awful Jew"—receiver of stolen goods, a Hebrew Blueskin—in the story, to the conception and embodiment of Fagin, there is an immeasurable distance.*

"I was speaking of my first interview with him at his house, Mornington Crescent, Regent's Park," says Cuthbert Bede. "He wished me to write a humorous story of modern life, to be illustrated by himself, with a series of designs, something after the style of his 'Adventures of Mr. Lambkin; or, The Bachelor's own

* As well might Sir David Wilkie have claimed the authorship of Douglas Jerrold's drama, "The Rent Day," because the idea was suggested to the dramatist by the great Scotch painter's pictures. But Sir David only thanked Douglas Jerrold, and sent him proofs of his "Distraining for Rent" and "The Rent Day," with expressions of his acknowledgments inscribed upon them.

Book,' and he jotted down some rough memoranda and sketches (in pencil) embodying his own ideas on the subject. One of these slight drawings was singularly skilful. It represented the shoulders and the tops of the heads of people in the pit of a theatre, as they would appear to a spectator in the gallery—the foreshortening being both curious and difficult. As a matter of course, I gave my best consideration to Mr. Cruikshank's suggestions and ideas, but submitted to him that I could not see my way to carry them out to our mutual satisfaction; and I also raised objections to the somewhat hackneyed nature of the themes that he suggested, and stated my preference for writing a story that should be wholly and entirely my own original composition. After much discussion *pro* and *con*, Mr. Cruikshank yielded to my wishes, and said, 'Then the tale shall be entirely out of your own head!' While he spoke, he rapidly drew a fancy sketch of my head, to the back portion of which was affixed a pig-tail, as large as that worn by an old fashioned Jack Tar. He held this sketch up to view who had just then re-entered the room, and [illegible]

cheery way, 'We have settled the point. He does not like my whiskers,'—the hero of the tale, I may add, was to have been readily distinguished in the illustrations by the peculiarity of his whiskers,—'so he is going to get a *tail* out of his own head." It reminded me of his sketch of the grenadier, whose pig-tail was tied so tightly that he was unable to shut his eyes; also of another pig-tail sketch in the *Omnibus*, where the gentleman who has gone to bed 'half-seas over' wakes up to sobriety, and, springing out of bed, discovers that his pig-tail has been tied to the bell-rope, and that the house has been aroused through his vain struggles to get free."

"The Adventures of Mr. Lambkin" were entirely Cruikshank's own, and they were the least successful, and deservedly so, of his works.

Never has a single figure enacted by mortal artist been so talked and written about as Fagin.* How and when he was conceived, where the artist found his model, what share Dickens had, and what part belonged to Cruikshank of "the awful Jew," are points of controversy which have been kept alive in society as much

by Cruikshank's own acting of his idea, and his many accounts of his conception, as by the deep impression made by that dreadful wretch glaring in the condemned cell. The writer of the obituary notice of Cruikshank in the *Daily News* himself heard Cruikshank relate that Fagin was sketched from a rascally old Jew whom he observed in the neighbourhood of Saffron Hill; "and, he added, "I watched him for weeks, studying him." Fagin possessed Cruikshank's mind to the end of his life. He was always ready to talk about him, and to act him.

"Sitting down," says Cuthbert Bede, describing one of his visits to the artist in the Hampstead Road, "and crouching in the huddled posture of 'the Jew—the dreadful Jew—that Cruikshank drew'—to quote Thackeray's words—fiercely gnawing at his finger-nails, tossing his hair loosely about his head, and calling up a look of wild horror into his eyes, the artist, with the great histrionic powers that he possessed, seemed to have really transformed himself into the character of the Jew whom he so forcibly depicted. His features somewhat

helped him in this impersonation, though those of Sir Charles Napier required no distortion of art, but were so exceedingly like to those of Cruikshank's Jew, that he was popularly called in the army by the name of 'Old Fagin.'"

Cruikshank told Horace Mayhew how he hit upon the figure of Fagin in the condemned cell. He had been thinking it over many days, and could not satisfy himself. "At length, beginning to think the task was almost hopeless, he was sitting up in bed one morning, with his hand covering his chin, and the tips of his fingers between his lips, the whole attitude expressive of disappointment and despair, when he saw his face in a cheval glass, which stood on the floor opposite to him. 'That's it,' he involuntarily exclaimed, 'that's just the expression I want!' and by this accidental process the picture was formed in his mind."* He was never tired of talking on the subject. Fagin possessed him,

* "Memories of my Time." By George Hodder, author of "Sketches of Life and Character." Tinsley Brothers. 1870.

just as Dickens lived in his characters, and made them talk in his letters and speeches. Mr. Austin Dobson, who met Cruikshank at breakfast at Mr. Frederick Locker's house on the 14th of December (1877), writes to me, "He told us many particulars respecting his work, and especially his visits to prisons and criminals in connection with 'Oliver Twist.' Finally, I asked him if the popular story of the conception of Fagin's wonderful attitude in the condemned cell was correct. He replied rather energetically, 'False!' You will remember that in that version the drawing was the result of accident. The artist was biting his nails in desperation, when suddenly he caught the reflection of his perplexed face in a cheval glass—hence Fagin. Cruikshank's account was different. He had never been perplexed in the matter, or had any doubt as to his design. He attributed the story to the fact that not being satisfied whether the knuckles should be raised or depressed, he had made studies of his own hand in a glass, to the astonishment of a child-relative looking on, who could not conceive what he was doing. He illustrated his

account by putting his hand to his mouth, looking, with his hooked nose, wonderfully like the character he was speaking of,—so much so, that for a few minutes afterwards Mr. Locker playfully addressed him as 'Mr. Fagin.' I did not see at the time why he was so tenacious. But, of course, what he wished to impress upon us was that the drawing of Fagin in the cell, which shares with Sikes attempting to destroy his dog the post of honour in 'Oliver Twist,' was the result, not of a happy accident, but his own persistent and minute habit of realization; and though there appears to be a modern disposition to doubt that a man can know anything about his own past, I for one shall always prefer Mr. Cruikshank's story to the others." *

There is, no doubt, truth in all these stories. Cruikshank studied often in Petticoat Lane, to begin with, and probably fixed his model of Fagin there. That he himself told Horace Mayhew, many years ago, how he caught sight of his own image as he sat up in bed,

* Letters to B. J., April 2, 1878.

and adopted it for Fagin in the condemned cell, I know. And finally, that he studied his hands in his glass, with that careful observation of details by which he reached such intensity in the expression of an emotion, or a dramatic incident, by all who knew him will be accepted as an ordinary illustration of his "habit of realization."

On Cruikshank's illustrations to "Oliver Twist," how many critics have dwelt; and by them, how many writers have pointed their moral. Ruskin, in his chapter on Vulgarity,* turns for his illustration to Landseer and Cruikshank.

"Cunning," he remarks, "signifies especially a habit or gift of over-reaching, accompanied with enjoyment and a sense of superiority. It is associated with small and dull conceit, and with an absolute want of sympathy or affection. Its essential connection with vulgarity may be at once exemplified by the expression of the butcher's dog in Landseer's 'Low Life.' Cruikshank's

* "Modern Painters."

'Noah Claypole,' in the illustrations to 'Oliver Twist,' in the interview with the Jew, is, however, still more characteristic. It is the intensest rendering of vulgarity absolute and utter with which I am acquainted."

Mr. Paget, in his admirable article on Cruikshank's genius, already quoted, becomes eloquent on the prodigious effect upon his time which the pictorial moralist achieved, and especially by his illustrations to "Oliver Twist":—

"More than forty years have passed since the appear- of these works;* and if we were asked who, through that period, has been the most faithful chronicler of the ways, customs, and habits of the middle and lower classes of England, we should answer, George Cruikshank. In his pictures of society there is no depth which he has not sounded. From the murderer's cell to the pauper's deathbed there is no phase of crime and misery which has not served him to point a moral. But his sympathies are never perverted, or his sense of right and

* "The Queen's Matrimonial Ladder," etc.

wrong dimmed by the atmosphere in which he moves. He is a stern though kindly moralist. In his hands vice is vice—a foe with whom no terms are to be kept. Yet, with what true feeling, what consummate skill, does he discriminate the shades of character, the ranks and degrees of crime, the extent and limits of moral corruption! In none of his works is this so apparent as in what we are inclined to rank as the most refined and complete of all, namely, the illustrations to "Oliver Twist." Charles Dickens and George Cruikshank worked cordially hand in hand in the production of this admirable work, and neither will grudge to the other his share in the fame which has justly attended their joint labours. The characters are not more skilfully developed, as the story unfolds itself, by the pen of Dickens, than by the pencil of his colleague. Every time we turn over this wonderful series, we are more and more impressed with the genius that created, and the close observation of human nature which developed, the characteristics of Oliver through every varying phase of his career, from the memorable day when he 'asked for

more';—of Sikes, the housebreaker (compare his fa in the frontispiece of the first column, where he has ju t brought Oliver back to the Jew, with that at page 21 of the third volume, where he is attempting to destr his dog); of Fagin—from the 'merry old gentlema frying sausages, to the ghastly picture of abject terr which he presents in the condemned cell; of No Claypole,—mark him as he lies cowering under the dresser in Mrs. Sowerberry's kitchen, with little Oliver standing triumphant over him with flashing eye and dilated nostril, and again behold him lolling in the arm-chair, whilst Charlotte feeds his gluttonous appetite with oysters; of Charlotte herself; of Mrs. Corney; of the workhouse master; the paupers; the boy-thieves; of Messrs. Blathers and Duff, the police officers; and the immortal Mrs. Bumble—a character which has furnished new terms to our vocabulary, and the glory of producing which may be fairly divided between the author and the artist. Nor is the portraiture of Mrs. Bedwin, the housekeeper, who only appears once—but by that single appearance makes us familiar with her whole history

and character—less admirably conceived and executed. The same may be said of Mr. Brownlow and Mr. Losborne. Nor is this perfection the result of a lucky hit or happy accident, by which a far inferior artist may sometimes succeed in producing what is acknowledged by the eye as the impersonation of the impression produced on the mind by the art of the novelist or the poet. It is the result of deep study and profound sympathy, with all the varied action of the human heart. It is genius, the twin-brother of that which inspired Garrick and Kean, and which, in its rarest and most refined developments, brings before our eyes even now new beauties latent in the characters of Hamlet and of Rosalind. We say this in no spirit of exaggeration, but with a profound conviction that no hand could have produced such works as those of George Cruikshank, which was now the index of the organ of a heart deeply imbued with the finest sympathies of humanity, and an intellect highly endowed with power of the keenest perception and the subtlest analysis."

Mr. Sala has described the "rough but superb"

etchings to the "Sketches by Boz," which pre
the world for the finer and profounder work in "O
Twist," and he instances "The Streets—Morning
an exquisite bit of observation. But can anyt
surpass, as a picture of close and various study of
the "Parish Engine"—from the superb beadle at
door, to the urchins rejoicing over the excitement? As pictures of manners, dress, and the habits of the people some forty years ago, they have the value of historical records. Those times live again, under our wondering eyes, by the help of the artist's genius; and none can deny the immense value they are in helping the younger generation to understand the fresh and racy humour of the text.

Mr. Sala very properly questions whether Cruikshank would have succeeded even with "Pickwi
"While," he adds, "to illustrate such works
'Martin Chuzzlewit,' and the later novels of Dick
he would have been manifestly out of place," h
might have "been in his element" with "Nichol
Nickleby." Thackeray, however, once pointed out th

Grimaldi loses his Bet.—From "The Life of Grimaldi," edited by Boz.

Cruikshank would never have managed to draw Sir Mulberry Hawk's cabriolet horse. But he was never more at home than in his illustrations to the life of his old Islington friend and boon companion, Joe Grimaldi, which Dickens unwillingly consented to edit for Mr. Bentley. Dickens put the manuscript in order, and strung it together—dictating connecting bits to his father, whom Mr. Forster describes as revelling in the work. John Dickens revelled in work as well as play; in a bowl of gin punch, which it was his delight to mix at the Rainbow, in Fleet Street, and over which I have heard him tell many a capital story, not more than in his work as first manager of the Parliamentary staff of the *Daily News*.

Dickens described the manuscript of the life of the celebrated clown as twaddle, and was astonished at its success. "Seventeen hundred Grimaldis have been already sold," he wrote to Forster, "and the demand increases daily!" Perhaps he did not rate at their full value George Cruikshank's etchings, which had a habit, in those days, of making "twaddle" palatable

to the public very often. Over Grimaldi, Dickens and Cruikshank parted as author and artist; but they continued fast friends for many years after.

Shaking a Doctor.—From "More Mornings at Bow Street."

"The dustman's cart offends thy clothes and eyes,
When through the street a cloud of ashes flies."

From "More Mornings at Bow Street."

CHAPTER IX.

ILLUSTRATIONS TO HARRISON AINSWORTH'S ROMANCES.

EARLY in 1839, on the conclusion of "Oliver Twist," Charles Dickens handed over the editorship of *Bentley's Miscellany* to Harrison Ainsworth; and with this transfer, George Cruikshank's etching-needle passed from the pages of the old to those of the new editor.

Cruikshank by no means stood alone as illustrator at the outset of *Bentley's Miscellany*. Samuel Lover illustrated his own "Handy Andy," and Buss and Phiz appeared as etchers. Dickens, in announcing vol. ii.

in a theatrical address, said: "The scenery will continue to be supplied by the creative pencil of Mr. George Cruikshank." In the second volume, by way of illustration to "The Autobiography of a Joke"—Dr Charles Mackay's first appearance, he tells me, as a magazine writer—Cruikshank drew one of his wonderful jovial bottles dancing upon the table. It was in the third volume, beginning with the year 1838, that Cruikshank stood alone as illustrator. Early in 1839, Dickens transferred the editorship of the *Miscellany* to one of his "most intimate and valued friends," Mr. Ainsworth.

In the first volume of 1840 we find illustrations by Alfred Crowquill in the *Miscellany;* in the second volume of the same year Leech appeared, both on wood and steel. The woodcuts—especially one of "a highly respectable man"—are full of humour and fresh observation.

Extraordinary as the advance had been which Cruikshank had made by his powerful dramatic illustrations to "Oliver Twist," his illustrations to Mr. Ainsworth's romances, and particularly to "The Tower of London,"

and "Windsor Castle," and "The Miser's Daughter" —proved that he had yet higher laurels to win. His etchings on steel show a greatly superior technical handling to his earlier work with the needle. He obtained effects which Rembrandt would not have disdained. He showed for the first time that he could realize a middle distance, as well as a foreground and a background. And then he had in perfect subjection, and ready to his hand and mind, all the vast store of observation of men and things, he had been indefatigably accumulating from his boyhood His plates to these three works are absolutely astonishing, when they are analysed, for the amount of original thought, —for the technical skill in rendering infinite varieties of light and shade, of emotion, of scenery,—which they comprehend.

It is deeply to be lamented that Cruikshank's connection with Harrison Ainsworth*—a connection in which the artist found some of his finer inspirations

* Mr. Ainsworth died while these volumes were passing through the press, January 1882.

—was marred by quarrels, and was sundered finally with a controversy, which is the counterpart of that he engaged in with the biographer and the friends of Charles Dickens. I suspect that Thackeray involuntarily led Cruikshank to claim more than his proper share in the successes he and Harrison Ainsworth had together.

"With regard to the modern romance of 'Jack Sheppard,'" Thackeray remarks, "in which the latter personage (Jonathan Wild) makes a second appearance, it seems to us that Mr. Cruikshank really created the tale, and that Mr. Ainsworth, as it were, only put words to it. Let any reader of the novel think over it for a while, now that it is some months since he has perused and laid it down—let him think, and tell us what he remembers of the tale. George Cruikshank's pictures —always George Cruikshank's pictures. The storm in the Thames, for instance; all the author's laboured description of that event has passed clean away—we have before our mind's eye the fine plates of Cruikshank. The poor wretch cowering under the bridge

arch, as the waves come rushing in, and the boats are whirling away in the drift of the great swollen black waters; and let any man look at that second plate of the murder on the Thames, and he must acknowledge how much more brilliant the artist's description is than the writer's, and what a real genius for the terrible as well as for the ridiculous the former has; how awful is the gloom of the old bridge, a few lights glimmering from the houses here and there, but not so as to be reflected on the water at all, which is too turbid and raging; a great heavy rack of clouds goes sweeping over the bridge, and men with flaring torches—the murderers—are borne away with the stream.

"The author requires many pages to describe the fury of the storm, which Mr. Cruikshank has represented in one. First, he has to prepare you with the something inexpressibly melancholy in sailing on a dark night upon the Thames; 'the ripple of the water,' 'the darkling current,' 'the indistinctly seen craft,' 'the solemn shadows,' and other phenomena visible on rivers at night, are detailed (with not unskilful rhetoric) in

order to bring the reader into a proper state of mind for the deeper gloom and horror which is to ensue. Then follow pages of description. . . . See what a tremendous war of words (and good loud words too; Mr. Ainsworth's description is a good and spirited one) the author is obliged to pour in upon the reader before he can effect his purpose upon the latter, and inspire him with a proper terror. The painter does it at a glance, and old Wood's dilemma in the midst of that tremendous storm, with the little infant at his bosom, is remembered afterwards, not from the words, but from the visible image of them that the artist has left us."

Thackeray rates these "Jack Sheppard" plates among the most finished and the most successful of Cruikshank's performances; dwelling lovingly on the conscientiousness of the artist, and that shrewd pervading idea of *form* which is one of his principal characteristics. They bear witness to the minuteness as well as to the fidelity of the artist's observation. Not the smallest object, nor its proper place in his design, escapes his eye. He has stored up in the camera of his brain the

many ways in which a chair may fall, as well as the thousand and one lights and shadows of expression which play upon a man's face as he progresses through the chapters of his life.

Thackeray, let it be said, was always unjust to Harrison Ainsworth. He caricatured him unmercifully in *Punch*, and never lost an opportunity of being amusing at his expense. His reasoning in regard to "Jack Sheppard" is manifestly unjust and unsound. "Jack Sheppard" was the natural sequence to "Rookwood," which, in popular parlance, had taken the town by storm, and had suddenly made the young author famous. "Dick Turpin's Ride to York" became the talk of all England. Colnaghi published a separate set of illustrations, by Hall, of the principal scenes described by Mr. Ainsworth. Cruikshank was called in only to furnish some illustrations to the second edition.

The success of "Rookwood" directed the mind of Bulwer to "Paul Clifford," and probably suggested to Dickens his "Oliver Twist." Even Cruikshank himself admits that "Jack Sheppard" was "originated" by

the author. A fashion for highwaymen and burglars as heroes of romance had been set by Ainsworth; and Bulwer and Dickens dived into the haunts of thieves to get at their *argot*, or "patter flash," * and their ways of thinking and acting. Both made great hits. "Paul Clifford" and "Oliver Twist" were the two books of the day. Mr. Ainsworth, irritated at the unceremonious manner in which his ground had been invaded, put forth "Jack Sheppard" (1839), on assuming the editorship of *Bentley's Miscellany*. It was as natural a step from "Rookwood," especially after "Paul Clifford" and "Oliver Twist," as chapter two is from chapter one. Mr. Ainsworth had his revenge upon the trespassers, for "Jack" threw "Oliver," for the moment, into the background. This gave umbrage to Mr. John Forster. Mr. Ainsworth says :—

* "I got my slang in a much easier way," said Mr. Ainsworth; "I picked up the memoirs of one Vaux—James Hardy Vaux—a returned transport. The book was full of adventures, and had at the end a kind of slang dictionary. Out of this I got all my 'patter.' Having read it thoroughly, and mastered it, I could use it with perfect facility."

"I am sorry to think that the success of 'Jack Sheppard' should have led him (Forster) to regard me as a momentary rival to his idol, but he assuredly treated me as one. My little burglar was certainly the lion of the day. The story was dramatised and played simultaneously at half a dozen theatres. Every street-boy yelled 'Nix my dolly' and 'Jolly nose,' and large profits were made by managers. My own share of theatrical plunder was only twenty pounds, sent me by Davidge, of the Coburg Theatre. For the Adelphi version, made by Buckstone, I never made a single sixpence, although it filled the house to overflowing, and people said that every errand-boy looked forward to the day when he should develop into a full-blown burglar."

It would be doing Cruikshank shameful injustice to deny the attraction of his marvellous etchings, full of life, keen observation, and that happy dramatic power he had, which led him to feel and to embody the conception an author whom he illustrated; but, at the same time, it would be folly to accept him at his own estimate of his share in the "Jack Sheppard" success. Mrs.

Keeley has quite as strong a right to some of the common glory as George. It is surprising that he never laid claim to Paul Bedford's "Jolly Nose."* While the excitement lasted, Cruikshank made no claim to any share in the story, and he enjoyed to the full the immense success of his etchings.

On the completion of "Jack Sheppard" and the "Tower of London," Cruikshank quarrelled with Mr. Bentley.† He had a tendency, as one of his best friends

* G. Cruikshank lithographed an illustration to the "Jack Sheppard" quadrilles, "from Rodwell's celebrated romance," in which he represented Paul Bedford as Blueskin, Mrs. Keeley as Jack Sheppard, etc., dancing and singing in chorus, "Nix my dolly, pals." Mrs. Keeley remembers Cruikshank going behind the scenes to sketch her and Paul Bedford "in character," and she remarks that this was the only time she ever saw him.

† "The mention of his illustrations to 'Oliver Twist' led to some other talk concerning his connection with *Bentley's Miscellany*, and he expressed his interest when I told him that my first appearances in print were in the pages of that magazine, when I was yet in my 'teens,' my various contributions being in verse. But this was after he had ceased to illustrate it, and when the chief etchings for its pages were supplied by John Leech. He told me of his misunderstandings with Mr. Bentley,

has remarked, to quarrel with all persons with whom he had business relations; and when he did quarrel, his words knew no bounds. In his "Popgun" he has drawn himself holding a publisher by the nose with a

and he has referred to them, in a paper in his *Omnibus*, as follows: 'To "Oliver Twist" and "Jack Sheppard" I devoted my best exertions; but, so far from effecting a monopoly of my labours, the publisher in question (Mr. Bentley) has not, for a twelvemonth past, had from me more than a single plate for his monthly *Miscellany*, nor will he ever have more than that single plate per month, nor shall I ever illustrate any other work that he may publish.' These single plates that he here mentions are the poorest that ever proceeded from his etching-needle, and would appear to have been wilfully and defiantly badly drawn, under the compulsion of an agreement that the artist was bound to carry out. He lived, however, to execute other and better work for Mr. Bentley, notably some additional illustrations to the evergreen 'Ingoldsby Legends.' Cruikshank used to place his watch upon the table and run his etching point over his design at the utmost speed. The outline made, he turned the plate over to his brother Robert, who finished it. Sands bit it up, and then it was forwarded to Bentley. The results fell so far short of George Cruikshank working *con amore*, that at last Mr. Bentley was content to set the unmanageable artist free. The secession of Cruikshank from the *Miscellany* made room for John Leech."—*Cuthbert Bede.*

pair of tongs.* His temporary separation from Mr. Bentley led him to start a magazine of his own, the *Omnibus*, and to turn from Mr. Ainsworth to Laman Blanchard as literary co-operator. Of this presently.

On the retirement of Ainsworth from *Bentley's Miscellany*, business relations were resumed between himself and the artist; and Cruikshank was advertised as illustrator of *Ainsworth's Magazine*. And at this point Cruikshank passed from his humorous to his more ambitious and higher phase.

"The Tower of London" appears to have made a strong effect on Cruikshank's mind. In the *Omnibus* he drew some curious bits of observation of the wreck of that part of the Tower which the fire had attacked, and in his illustrations to Ainsworth's story he manifested a desire to express the historical power as an artist that was in him. He composed pictures free from exaggeration, and grand and impressive both in conception and treatment. Having substituted steel plates for copper, he felt

* The publisher threatened the artist with an action, and compelled him to withdraw the pamphlet from circulation.

that he was upon more lasting work, and he laboured hard to produce pictures of the highest finish. He was right: some of the finest work he has left lies between Ainsworth's pages, and indicates a range of power in the artist which he was never destined to prove fully. The fates had been against him in early life; and he was, although even much later he could not bring his eager and intrepid mind to admit it, too old to take his seat in an academy, and get through the drudgery, without which not even the most bountifully gifted artist can do himself justice. In these Rembrandt-like scenes in the Tower, he taught the world that his idea that he was a great historical painter who had lost his way, was no wild and vain fancy.

The new arrangement was one of the most lucrative Cruikshank ever enjoyed, receiving forty pounds monthly for his plates. It opened a connection, during which Cruikshank executed, as he rightly believed, "a hundred and forty-four of the very best designs and etchings" he ever produced. It is a pity that such a connection should have ended in an unworthy quarrel

in which Cruikshank, with his usual vehemence and wildness in statement, made charges against his author which it was utterly impossible for him to justify. He has described their relations in this way :—

"I must here first state that, as large sums of money had been realized from my ideas and suggestions for the work of 'Oliver Twist,' it occurred to me one day that I would try and get a little of the same material from the same source ; and as Mr. Ainsworth and I were at the time upon the most friendly—I may say brotherly—terms, I suggested to him that we should jointly produce a work on our own account, and publish it in monthly numbers, and get Mr. Bentley to join us as the publisher. Mr. Ainsworth was delighted with the idea of such a partnership, and at once acceded to the proposition ; and when I told him I had a capital subject for the first work, he inquired what it was ; and upon my telling him it was the Tower of London, with some incidents in the life of Lady Jane Grey, he was still more delighted, and then I told him that I had long since seen the room in the Tower where that beautiful

and accomplished dear lady was imprisoned, and other parts of that fortress, to which the public were not admitted; and if he would then go with me to the Tower, I would show these places to him. He at once accepted my offer, and off we went to Hungerford Stairs, now the site of the Charing Cross Railway Station; and whilst waiting on the beach for a boat to go to London Bridge, we there met my dear friend, the late W. Jerdan, the well-known editor and part proprietor of the *Literary Gazette*, who inquired where we were going to. My reply was, that I was taking Mr. Ainsworth a prisoner to the Tower. With this joke we parted. I then took Mr. Ainsworth to the royal prison, and when we arrived there, I introduced him to my friend Mr. Stacey, the storekeeper, in whose department were these 'Chambers of Horrors'; and then and there did Mr. Ainsworth, for the first time, see the apartment in which the dear Lady Jane was placed until the day she was beheaded, or, in other words, the day on which she was murdered! and which place I had long before made sketches of, for the purpose of introducing them in

a 'Life of Lady Jane Grey,' and which for many years I had intended to place before the public. I have now most distinctly to state that Mr. Ainsworth *wrote up to most of my suggestions and designs*, although some of the subjects we *jointly* arranged, to introduce into the work; and I used every month to send him the *tracings* or *outlines* of the *sketches* or *drawings* from which I was making the etchings to illustrate the work, *in order that he might write up to them*, and that they should be accurately described." Cruikshank goes on to assert that the plates were printed before the manuscript was printed, and sometimes before the manuscript was written.

The "Tower of London" was a great success. Cruikshank states that, while it was running, one bookseller told him that if he and Ainsworth brought out "another work similar in style and interest," he would take 20,000 a month to begin with, while another offered to take 25,000, or even 30,000. On the completion of "The Tower," according to Cruikshank, he suggested to Ainsworth "The Plague and the Fire

of London." "Oh!" exclaimed the author, "that *is* first-rate."

It was understood, according to Cruikshank, that both author and artist should set to work on the new subject; but the author unceremoniously seized the artist's idea, and sold his story to the *Sunday Times*. After a time, on the intercession of their mutual friend Mr. Pettigrew, Cruikshank says that he consented to work again with the author who had stolen his idea. He even went further; he suggested another story to him, viz., "The Miser's Daughter," which he had intended to have worked out by another author in his *Omnibus*.

"The *next romance* by Mr. Ainsworth," says Cruikshank, "which *appeared in his magazine*, was 'Windsor Castle,' and the illustrations to the *first part* of that work were done by Tony Johannot—the remainder by me; and I will now explain how it came to pass that we two brother artists came to be employed upon the same work. After Mr. Ainsworth had finished 'Old St. Paul's,' he, of course, wanted to produce another

work, and to have it *illustrated;* and, as under the then existing circumstances he could not apply to me, he had to engage another artist. And why he did not employ Mr. Franklin on this occasion I know not, but I believe he went over to Paris, and engaged Tony Johannot to make the drawings and etchings for This 'Windsor Castle;' and these illustrations were done whilst I was working on my *Omnibus*. But whether he found this plan to be too inconvenient or otherwise, I cannot tell; but, as he induced my friend Pettigrew to come to me and negotiate for a 'treaty of peace,' it is, I think, pretty evident that he wanted the assistance of my head and hand work again. *After* 'Windsor Castle' came the 'Romance of St. James's; or, The Court of Queen Anne;' and *after* that, Mr. Harrison Ainsworth *sold his magazine* to his publishers! So it really appeared as if all this gentleman's promises, like pie-crust, were made to be broken; and, as in this instance, also, there was not any *written agreement*, the arrangements which he had made, and the engagements he had entered into with me when I agreed to work

with him in his magazine, all broke down, and I, as it were, again 'thrown overboard,' or 'left in the lurch.' And thus ended the second edition of this *author's* extraordinary conduct towards the *artist.*"

Cruikshank lays equal stress, in support of his pretensions, on the appearance (March 1842) of a drawing made by him, at Ainsworth's suggestion, "of the '*author*' and the '*artist*' seated, in council, or conversing together in his library." It is a charming sketch, and both portraits are excellent; but how it proves that the 'artist' did the author's work, or any part of it, as well as his own, it is difficult to conceive. Cruikshank asserted that "after the second edition of Mr. Ainsworth's extraordinary conduct, the penitent author again sent Mr. Pettigrew to entreat him to be friends once more, and resume work together. "When I heard this," says Cruikshank, "my friend the doctor found it was not at all necessary to *feel* my pulse; for he could plainly *see* that it beat *rather fiercely* when, in reply, I said, 'No, Pettigrew. Mr. Ainsworth has acted towards me in what I consider a most dishonour-

able manner upon *two* occasions, and I will take care that he shall not do so a *third* time."

To all this Mr. Harrison Ainsworth made answer:—

A FEW WORDS ABOUT GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

"On the production at the Adelphi Theatre of the late Mr. Andrew Halliday's drama, founded on the Miser's Daughter,' George Cruikshank sent a letter to the *Times*, loudly complaining of the omission of his name from the playbill, and asserting that he had suggested the title and general plan of the story.

"A more preposterous assertion was never made. Had there been any truth whatever in the claim thus impudently advanced, why was it not made long before? The story was written thirty years previously—namely, in 1842—and after that long interval the old artist sets up this absurd pretension.

"I believed him to be in his dotage, and was confirmed in the opinion when I found he laboured under a similar delusion in regard to 'Oliver Twist.'

* This was Mr. Ainsworth's final explanation, addressed to B. J. for publication.

"For myself, I desire to state emphatically, that not a single line—not a word—in any of my novels was written by their illustrator, Cruikshank. In no instance did he even see a proof. The subjects were arranged with him early in the month, and about the fifteenth he used to send me tracings of the plates. That was all.

"As explanatory of the original design of the 'Miser's Daughter,' as well as to dispose of Cruikshank's unwarrantable assertion that he had furnished the original scheme of the story, I will now cite the preface to the cheap edition of the work, published in 1850, by Chapman and Hall. If Cruikshank had any claim to the authorship of the tale, why did he not make it then?

"To expose the folly and wickedness of accumulating wealth for no other purpose than to hoard it up, and to exhibit the utter misery of a being who should thus voluntarily surrender himself to the dominion of Mammon, is the chief object of these pages. And I believe they will be found to convey a useful lesson,

and one not wholly inapplicable to the times; for though the Miser may now be a rarer character than heretofore, the greed of gain was never more generally indulged in, nor the worship of the golden calf more widely spread and less reproved than at present. I have shown that all high and generous feelings, all good principles, and even natural affection itself, will become blunted, and in the end completely destroyed, by the inordinate and all-engrossing passion for gain: and I have shown the truth,—a truth borne out by the history of every such wretched votary of wealth. The sin carries its own punishment with it; and is made the means of chastising the sinner. Dead to every feeling except that of adding to his store, the miser becomes incapable of enjoyment except such as is afforded by the contemplation of his useless treasure, and at last he is deprived even of this selfish and unhallowed gratification, for dread of losing his gold far outweighs delight in its possession. Distrust of all around him darkens his declining days; those who should be dearest to

him appear his worst enemies; he becomes a prey to the designer, until at length, while haunted by vague terrors, and despairingly clinging to his hoards, they are snatched from his grasp by the ruthless hand of death. 'So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.'

"Other and lighter portions of the tale refer to the adventures of a young man on his first introduction to town-life about the middle of the last century, when Ranelagh was in its zenith, and Vauxhall and Marylebone Gardens in vogue; when the Thames boasted its Folly, and when coffee-houses filled the places of clubs. The descriptions I believe to be tolerably accurate, and they are at all events carefully done, with the view of giving a correct idea of the manners, habits, and pursuits of our great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers. Temptations to pleasurable excess were no doubt sufficiently abundant then, but not more abundant than nowadays, when casinos and other places of licentious resort are tolerated; and our modern youth have as much to fear from

the allurement of vice as their predecessors. Apart, indeed, from a certain grossness in conversation, our forefathers were to the full as decorous as ourselves, and quite as moral, though they did not cloak their faults so carefully. Consequently, vice in those days was less dangerous, because less specious and more easily shunned than at a time when its ugliness is better concealed.

"It was part of my original scheme to describe the secret proceedings of the Jacobites in Lancashire and Cheshire, prior to the Rebellion of Forty-five, with Prince Charles's entrance into Manchester in that memorable year, and the subsequent march to Derby.* But I found these details incompatible with my main plan, and was therefore obliged to relinquish them; contenting myself with a slight sketch of a conspiracy in London, hatched by certain adherents of the young Chevalier. Cordwell Firebras is no fictitious personage.

* This has since been done in the "Manchester Rebels," published in 1873.

"The incident of the payment of the mortgage-money is founded on fact. A similar occurrence took place about the period in question, and the pay-master was a proud Welsh baronet, as described, with a pedigree as old as the hills. The particulars were related to me by my excellent friend Mrs. Hughes, to whom I am indebted for many valuable suggestions. It is, perhaps, needless to say, that in consequence of the alteration of the law respecting the foreclosure of mortgages, such a circumstance could not take place now.

"*Ne sutor ultra crepidam.* Had Cruikshank been capable of constructing a story, why did he not exercise his talent when he had no connection with Mr. Dickens or myself? But I never heard of such a tale being published.

"I have been connected with many distinguished artists—with Sir John Gilbert, with Tony Johannot, with Hablot K. Browne, John Franklin, and others, and never heard that any one of them claimed a share in the authorship of the works he illustrated.

"But overweening vanity formed a strong part of Cruikshank's character. He boasted so much of the assistance he had rendered authors, that at last he believed he had written their works. Had he been connected with Fielding, he would no doubt have asserted that he wrote a great portion of 'Tom Jones.' Moreover, he was excessively troublesome and obtrusive in his suggestions. Mr. Dickens declared to me that he could not stand it, and should send him printed matter in future.

"It would be unjust, however, to deny that there was not wonderful cleverness and quickness about Cruikshank, and I am indebted to him for many valuable hints and suggestions.

"While writing the 'Tower of London,' which first appeared in monthly numbers, I used always to spend a day with the artist at the beginning of each month in the Tower itself; and since every facility was afforded us by the authorities, we left no part of the old fortress unexplored. To these visits I look back with the greatest pleasure, and feel that I could not

have had a more agreeable companion than the then genial George Cruikshank.

"As an illustration of another part of the artist's character, I may relate this little incident. On the completion of the 'Tower,' I gave a dinner at the Sussex Hotel, Bouverie Street, (where a good deal of the work had been written, the hotel being near the printing offices of Messrs. Bradbury and Evans), to about sixty of my friends, including the Fort Major and Acting Governor of the Tower, the Keeper of the Regalia, Mr. Justice Talfourd, Dickens, Maclise, Barham, Forster, Laman Blanchard, James Crossley of Manchester, Grainger, John Hughes, and many others. George Cruikshank occupied the vice-chair. As the guests were dispersing, several of them adjourned to the coffee-room, and of these Cruikshank took charge, saying to me as I was about to drive home to the Harrow Road,—

"'Now understand—this part of the entertainment is to be mine!'

"'Very well,' I replied. 'So be it.'

"But he must have forgotten the proposition, since if I recollect aright, I had a considerable sum to pay next morning for 'coffee and cigars.'

"On the completion of the 'Tower,' I did not go on with Cruikshank, but contributed 'Old Saint Paul's' to a weekly paper. This story—one of the most popular I have ever written—was republished in three volumes, with some admirable illustrations by John Franklin.

"Cruikshank's illustrations to 'Guy Fawkes,' which appeared in the *Miscellany*, simultaneously with the 'Tower,' were very inferior to those furnished by him for the latter story, and excited the ire of Mr. Bentley, with whom the artist had quarrelled. But the publisher's complaints were unheeded, as were my own remonstrances.

"On my retirement from the *Miscellany*, at the close of the year 1841, I resolved to bring out a magazine of my own, and with that view went to Paris to secure the famous Tony Johannot as illustrator of 'Windsor Castle,' a romance which I intended

should form the principal feature of the proposed magazine.

"I found M. Tony Johannot a most charming person, as he had been described to me, and passed several pleasant days in his society. He agreed to send me four plates, the subjects of which I gave him, together with designs for the cover of the magazine, and the title-page of story, and performed his promise to my entire satisfaction.

"On my return I was induced by my friend Mr. Pettigrew to engage George Cruikshank as the illustrator of the magazine, on terms infinitely more advantageous to the artist than those he had received from Mr. Bentley for his illustrations to 'Jack Sheppard' and 'Guy Fawkes.'

"Now commenced the 'Miser's Daughter,' to which I have already adverted. This was succeeded by 'Windsor Castle,'—four of the illustrations being furnished, as already mentioned, by Tony Johannot, and the remainder by Cruikshank. The numerous woodcuts were executed by Alfred Delamotte.

"The last story of mine, illustrated by Cruikshank, was 'Saint James's, or the Court of Queen Anne,' published in 1844. Since that date I saw very little of the artist.

"My first acquaintance with George Cruikshank occurred in 1835, when he made some capital illustrations to an edition of 'Rookwood' brought out by Mr. John Macrone, of St. James's Square—a young and spirited publisher, whose premature death was much to be lamented.

"Next came 'Jack Sheppard,' which succeeded 'Oliver Twist' in *Bentley's Miscellany*, and obtained an extraordinary success.

"From their Hogarthian character, and careful attention to detail, I consider these by far the best of Cruikshank's designs. They raised him to a point he had never before attained.

"I think it proper to mention that more than a third of the work was written before Cruikshank began to illustrate it.

"Of Cruikshank as a teetotaler I can say nothing,

because I saw nothing of him. When I knew him, he was extremely convivial, and used to sing a capital comic song, and dance the sailor's hornpipe, almost as well as the great T. P. Cooke. Perhaps he may have rather exceeded the bounds of discretion, but if he took a little too much, he was hearty and good-humoured, and would never have boasted as he afterwards did of writing portions of 'Oliver Twist' and the 'Miser's Daughter.'

"W. H. A."

Before parting finally with this most unpleasant part of my task, I must quote Cruikshank's summing-up of his pretensions in regard to Dickens and Ainsworth, to say nothing of "other men":—

"I now feel it necessary to inform the public that the usual or ordinary way of producing illustrated novels or romances is, for an author either to write out, *from his own ideas*, the whole of the tale, or in parts; the *manuscript* or *letterpress* of which is then handed to an artist, to *read and select* subjects from for his illustra-

tions, or sometimes for the author to *suggest to the artist* such subjects, scenes, or parts, as he might wish to be illustrated. And I, being known generally only as an artist, or illustrator, it would therefore very naturally be supposed that, *in all cases*, I have merely worked out *other men's ideas*. But, if I have the opportunity, I shall be able to show that *other men have sometimes worked out my ideas*—but this will be for another occasion. And I will now explain that 'Oliver Twist,' 'The Tower of London,' 'The Miser's Daughter,' etc., were produced in an entirely different manner from what would be considered as the usual course; for *I, the artist, suggested to the authors of these works the original idea*, or *subject*, for them to write out—furnishing, at the same time, the *principal characters and the scenes*. And then, as the tale had to be produced in monthly parts, the *writer*, or *author*, and the artist, had every month to arrange and settle what scenes, or subjects, and characters were to be introduced; and the author had to *weave in* such scenes as I wished to represent, and sometimes I had to work out his suggestions.

"And as to Mr. W. Harrison Ainsworth's 'singular delusion' of an artist claiming to be the originator of works which he had merely illustrated, no more absurd or contemptible and rubbishing nonsense could ever be conceived; for no artist could possibly be in his right mind who would make such a claim, and it becomes a serious question as to whether any one who brings forth such nonsense can be in *his* right mind; and if this *author* has really lost his memory, and as an invalid is suffering under '*singular delusions*,' he has my pity and commiseration.

"I lay no claim to anything that has *originated* from the mind of Mr. Ainsworth, or any other man; but where the original idea has emanated from my own mind, that I feel I have a right to claim, and by that right I will stand firm; and I trust that at no distant date I may be able to publish what I have already stated, to show the world how these ideas originated in my mind, and why I wished to place them before the public."

Cruikshank added that many friends, already passed away, would have vouched for the accuracy of the fore-

going. He cited two, however, on whose testimony in his favour *I know* he would not have relied; namely, Douglas Jerrold and Laman Blanchard. These had never heard of Cruikhsank's claim as originator of "Oliver Twist," or any of Ainsworth's novels, for the good reason that they had died before he put it forth. Blanchard, indeed, had experience akin to that of Ainsworth. An old friend of his and mine, returned lately from a twenty years' sojourn at the antipodes. I asked him if he remembered any incidents of the time when Laman Blanchard was editing the *Omnibus*. At first he could recall nothing, but after a long pause he said:

"All I remember is something very like a quarrel, one night, when Cruikshank was spending the evening at Blanchard's house. A friend praised a little poem that had appeared in the last number. Whereupon Cruikshank remarked that it was his idea as well as his illustration.

"I don't call to mind another occasion," said the traveller, "when I saw Blanchard give way to a violent passion; but on this he did. The idea and the poem were

one of his bright and graceful fancies; and he rose and denied that Cruikshank had had the least share in it, with a fierceness that confounded him."

"Och! faix! never mind the weight of it, yer honour; I'll step along under it beautiful."—From "More Mornings at Bow Street."

CHAPTER X.

THE OMNIBUS.

It was in 1841 that George Cruikshank, when at variance with Mr. Bentley, started a periodical on his own account. His friend Laman Blanchard, who was then one of the most popular essayists and political writers of the day, undertook the editorship.

The magazine opened in a thoroughly Cruikshankian style. There was a wondrously etched microcosm of the globe, which is accepted not only as one of the artist's technical triumphs, but as one of his happiest conceptions. The human race is epitomised within this circle, not much wider than a billiard ball. The sphere teems with many-sided life, etched with the "simple frankness" which Mr. P. G. Hamerton has described as the perfection of the art.* Let me here note that the

* "In etchings of this class Cruikshank carries one great virtue of the art to perfection—its simple frankness. He is so direct

Cits Tuesday 12 feb 11.

My dear Blanchard

I have been hoping you would call - can you come over this afternoon & not to day with you to Morrow

Omnibus etchings are the last by the artist upon copper. Then follows Cruikshank's portrait by Frank Stone, with his own very whimsical reply to Maginn's sketch of him in "Portraits of Public Characters." To the story, "Frank Hartwell; or, Fifty Years Ago," that ran through the twelve numbers of which the *Omnibus* consists, Cruikshank contributed some of his finest etched dramatic scenes: for example, "Frank and Sambo attacked by Ruffians in the Hold of the Tender," "Richard Brothers, the Prophet, at Mrs. Hartwell's," * and "Hartwell seizing Brady." Here too, is his

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and unaffected, that only those who know the difficulties of etching can appreciate the power that lies behind his unpretending skill; there is never, in his most admirable plates, the trace of a vain effort."—*Etching and Etchers.*

* "And in the talk about the *Omnibus*, at our first interview, he claimed, as his own suggestion and planning, its serial story, 'Frank Hartwell; or, Fifty Years Ago', by Bowman Tiller, which he illustrated with powerful etchings. He said that the introduction, in that story, of Richard Brothers, the Prophet, was entirely due to him; and he told me much concerning its eccentric author, and his custom of roaming through the streets during the stillest hours of the night, as he thereby fancied that

famous Jack O'Lantern. His light and humorous wood drawings scattered through the volume are full of fancy and wit. He drew dainty bits to Blanchard's graceful lyrics—"Love Seeking a Lodging," "Love has Legs" (a girl clipping Cupid's wings while he dozes by the fire), and "Love's Masquerade," for instance. Like Kenny Meadows, Cruikshank could draw the prettiest Cupids in the world.

Not even his "What is Taxes, Thomas?" is surpassed as a study by his "Two of a Trade"—the butcher boy and his dog, which is in the *Omnibus*.

"Oh! marvellous boy, what marvel when
I met thy dog and thee,
I marvelled if to dogs or men
You traced your ancestry!

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he could more quietly and effectually turn over in his brain the thoughts that he afterwards committed to paper. He told me many things concerning 'Bowman Tiller,' which, however, had better not be repeated here; especially as the author's name would appear to have been lost in obscurity, and is not even mentioned among the literary pseudonyms in Olphar Hamst's 'Handbook of Fictitious Names.'"—*Cuthbert Bede.*

If changed from what you once were known,
As sorrow turns to joy,
The boy more like the dog had grown,
The dog more like the boy.

It would a prophet's eyesight baulk,
To see through time's dark fog,
If on four legs the boy will walk,
Or if on two the dog." °

Thackeray and Captain Marryatt (who drew some small cuts which Cruikshank copied), and Edward Howard, the author of "Rattlin the Reefer," were among the contributors. Michael Angelo Titmarsh sent one of his most famous ballads—viz., "The King of Brentford's Testament." But the most sprightly and noteworthy feature of this first of the illustrated magazines was Mrs. Toddles, who is introduced with her feet in hot water, and with a glass of warm rum and water, with a bit of butter in it. She surely might have sat for Sairy Gamp, in Punch's personification of the *Morning Herald.*

And here she is again, at Margate. She gets her feet

° Laman Blanchard.

wet; "but," says her chronicler, "we dare say she would find a little drop of comfort, in the shape of *smuggled* Hollands at the lodgings." Mrs. Toddles was no better, in her drinking, we fear, than Mrs. Gamp and her friend Betsey.

In the "Monument to Napoleon," a famous Cruikshank idea, also in his *Omnibus*, we find the artist in his serious moralizing vein.

"On the removal of Napoleon's remains," he remarks, "I prepared this design for a monument; but it was not sent, because it was not wanted. There is this disadvantage about a design for *his* monument—it will suit nobody else. This could not, therefore, be converted into a tribute to the memory of the late distinguished philosopher, Muggeridge, head master of the Grammar-school at Birchley; nor into an embellishment for the mausoleum of the departed hero, Fitz Hogg of the Pipeclays. It very often happens, however, that when a monument to a great man turns out to be a misfit, it will, after a while, be found to suit some other great man as well as if his measure had been taken for

it. Just add a few grains to the intellectual qualities, subtract a scruple or so from the moral attributes—let out the philanthropy a little, and take in the learning a bit—clip the public devotion, and throw an additional handful of virtues into the domestic scale—qualify the squint, in short, or turn the aquiline into a snub—these slight modifications observed, and any hero or philosopher may be fitted to a hair with a second-hand monumental design. The standing tribute, 'We *ne'er* shall look upon his like again,' is of course applicable in *every* case of greatness."

With this monument Cruikshank took his leave of "Boney." "As for me," he said in a note to his design, "who have skeletonised him prematurely, paring down the prodigy even to his hat and boots, I have but 'carried out' a principle adopted almost in my boyhood, for I can scarcely remember the time when I did not take some patriotic pleasure in persecuting the great enemy of England. Had he been less than that, I should have felt compunction for my cruelties; having tracked him through snow and through fire, by flood

and by field, insulting, degrading, and deriding him everywhere, and putting him to several humiliating deaths. All that time, however, he went on 'overing' the Pyramids and the Alps, as boys 'over' posts, and playing at leapfrog with the sovereigns of Europe, so as to kick a crown off at every spring he made—together with many crowns and sovereigns in my coffers. Deep, most deep, in a personal view of matters, are my obligations to the agitator—but what a debt the country *owes to him!*"

But the *Omnibus* did not pay—even with all the wit and humour, and pleasant story, and sport with folly as it flew, to be found in it. Moreover, by the close of the year, Cruikshank had renewed his connection with Mr. Ainsworth; and Cruikshank has put on record that his *Omnibus* was begun in his disgust at the treatment he had received from Mr. Ainsworth, who had adopted his idea of a story on the Plague of London, and sold it to the proprietors of the *Sunday Times* for a thousand pounds. Then as to the stopping of the *Omnibus*, this is Cruikshank's own story:—

"It will now be necessary to state that the late Thomas Joseph Pettigrew, who was surgeon to their Royal Highnesses the Dukes of Kent and Sussex, was a dear and intimate friend of mine, and that I had introduced Mr. Ainsworth to him, and that after I had been going on with my *Omnibus* for something less than twelve months, to my utter astonishment, my friend Pettigrew called upon me one day with a message from Mr. W. Harrison Ainsworth, to this effect, that he (Mr. Ainsworth) was extremely sorry that there had been any unpleasantness between us, and that if I would forgive him, and be friends, nothing of the kind should ever happen again; that he was about to start a monthly magazine, and that if I would join him, and drive my 'Omnibus' into his magazine, he would take all the risk and responsibility upon himself, and make such arrangements as would compensate me liberally. To this most unexpected proposition at first I would not listen; but as my friend Pettigrew kept on for some time urging me to be friends again with Mr. Ainsworth, and as I am (as my friends say) in some cases rather *too good-*

natured and forgiving, I *did* forgive Mr. Ainsworth, and 'shake hands,' and agree to work with him again. My *Omnibus*, in some respects, did merge into *Ainsworth's Magazine;* but upon again joining with Mr. Ainsworth, I announced that the *Omnibus* would henceforth appear as an *annual*."

In the last number of the *Omnibus*, Cruikshank announced that, having "resumed" an arrangement entered into "a twelvemonth ago with Mr. Harrison Ainsworth," he could not continue his *Fireside Miscellany*—monthly. He ended with a pictorial joke. "If he and his literary associates," he added, "should meet the reader as agreeably in an annual as in a monthly form, he trusted it would be as long as it was short. The remark was illustrated by the square figure of a man.

The long and short of it, however, was, that the *Omnibus* never appeared again.

The following note will give the reader an idea of the activity of Cruikshank's faculty of suggestion, which led him so often to advance unwarrantable

claims as an originator. It is addressed to Laman Blanchard :—

"My dear Blanchard,—

"Barker does not mean anything by 'Unity.' 'Unity Peacham' is a *real* name somewhere in Westminster.

"That do not-wish-to-be-known young gentleman has sent me a paper entitled 'The Alamode Beef Shop.' I have sent for him to suggest a series of papers upon 'Eating Houses,' or something of that sort, and will get him to make two or three alterations in this first paper, and will then send it to you. I think it would be desirable to have it in the neighbourhood; that is, if you think as favourably of it as does

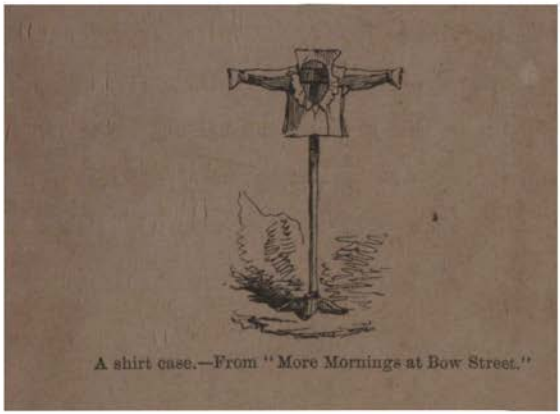
"Yours truly,

"G. Cruikshank.

"P.S.—Some one sent us a paper entitled 'The Alamode Beef Shop.' I think *he* ought to have a note stating that *he* has been *anticipated*, and that *we* do not allude to politics. I would keep that 'Traveller's

Story'* back. We can find some other trick to finish it with. You may use the 'Hot Water' in the 'Chat' if you like. I think also we had better omit those T-total cuts; they would come in well with the Confessions of a T-totaler?"

* "Travellers' Stories, or Travellers' Tales, would make a good heading—a good *Peg*." Where Cruikshank put up a peg he was inclined to claim any hat that was hung upon it.



A shirt case.—From "More Mornings at Bow Street."

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